



AMISH COUNTRY NEWS

Celebrating 22 Years! - Holiday 2011 / Winter 2012 - FREE

ANNUAL HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING GUIDE



Holiday Shopping in Paradise

An Insider's Guide
To Holiday Shopping
In Amish Country

Twelve Days
Of Christmas
In Amish Country

Mennonite Central Committee
Locally Based & Globally
A Guardian Angel



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While driving along Route 30 in Lancaster County, you may see a few unfamiliar, if not unique, sites. You may catch a glimpse of some folks dressed a little unusually. You'll probably see a few horse-drawn carriages instead of cars. And, you'll undoubtedly notice the Dutch Haven windmill. This landmark building has been drawing thousands of visitors each week to Lancaster County for the past 50 years. Opening first as a restaurant in 1946, the Dutch Haven operated with great success with a world famous Shoo Fly pie recipe.

Today, the Dutch Haven staple is still "America's Best Shoo Fly Pie." All you have to do is pass through the door and you will be offered a sample taste of this famous pie—warmed and topped with whipped cream, just like it was always served in the restaurant, years ago.

Some 40,000 pies will be sold at the Dutch Haven this year alone. While most of these shoo fly pies are purchased over the counter, some are shipped UPS. Many pies are sold to faithful customers who have been buying them from Dutch Haven for over half a century!

**Come Taste
America's Best
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As always at Dutch Haven, the famous pie that was featured in Time magazine is just part of the story. The windmill building now

houses one of, if not the best, selections of primitive Amish pine furniture in the area. Corner cupboards, pie safes, chests, and shelves are all available. Hundreds of pieces of Amish woodcrafts fill what once were the dining rooms of this wonderful old building. In addition, thousands of other items from pot holders to collectibles, T-shirts, small wood crafts, Amish romance novels, and much more make Dutch Haven a true shopping experience.

Dutch Haven's shopping hours are Sun.-Thurs. 9am-7pm, Fri. & Sat. 9am-9pm. For more information about this Lancaster County landmark, call (717) 687-0111.

Visiting Dutch Haven - "the place that made Shoo Fly Pie famous" - will help to make your trip to Pennsylvania Dutch Country even more memorable. 



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Jakey's Amish Barbeque

Holiday Shopping in Paradise



Jon is happily in charge of the outdoor shopping experience. With mums to care for, concrete statuary to stage, and jovial garden gnomes to keep happy, Jon finds creativity everywhere he turns.

The story of Jake's Country Trading Post starts years ago with a fateful vacation - a sort of mid-business crisis for two entrepreneurs. Ed and Melissa Jackson had been traveling the country as exhibitors in craft shows, fairs, and art festivals. Their business, The Leather Shack, was successful, but the constant setup, tear-down, and move-around was draining. They knew that it was time for a change.

They took a vacation, a journey that ended up spelling the end of The Leather Shack with regrets to their many and loyal leather followers, and the beginning of Jake's Country Trading Post. Ed and Melissa headed west, not really knowing what they would find. During their



Tell me what woman doesn't love a fashionable purse? Sherry personally approves all colors and styles that arrive each season. She doesn't stand for high prices either. Jake's is happy to allow you to leave with some of the "green" of your old purse transferred to your brand new one!

travels they passed through Arizona and New Mexico, discovering and instantly appreciating Native American Indian and Southwest crafts and décor. While it was a major departure from their previous leather business, the craft and home goods business seemed a natural fit for them. In colorful handmade designs, the Jacksons felt the true American spirit. They were intrigued by the varied and fanciful styles. So many of the crafts and art pieces were unlike anything they had seen back home in Amish Country. They were smitten.

They decided on the spot to fill their trunk (actually their entire car, for luckily they had vacationed in a large SUV). The newfound treasures were destined to become their new product line to the future delight of Amish Country shoppers. When they arrived back home they had plenty of merchandise, but no store to offer it for sale! They weren't about to get back into the craft show circuit. Surely, somewhere a shop beckoned.

It took visionaries to imagine that the former Keystone Cheese Factory on RT 30 just might be the answer. The building was pretty rough and in need of some serious work. Ed and Melissa took on the challenge, rolled up their sleeves and got to work. They built a new porch, put on a new roof, poured cement, laid tile, and eventually ended up with 14 finished rooms. The store first opened in 1996, and the building they so lovingly restored, stocked, and opened ever so quietly is still standing and ready for your shopping adventure. Indeed adventure is the operative word, and now...the rest of the story!

After all the hard work and exhausting effort on readying the new store, they realized it needed a name! Since both Ed and Melissa had grandfathers named Jake, they decided to christen it Jake's Country Trading Post. Word began to spread that Amish Country now had a Southwest Store, and customers came, first as curiosity seekers, and then again and again as enthusiastic regulars - so much so that Ed and Melissa soon found they needed more space, a "quality problem" as they like to say on Wall Street.

The Jacksons quickly expanded the building, doubling its size! It was ambitious, but the timing was fortuitous since they were about to launch a new product line. They had befriended a gentleman who "hailed Amish" (a taxi driver specializing in providing transportation to the Amish) and through him came to know many of the skilled Amish craftsmen in the area. They were amazed at the handcrafted work coming out of workshops within minutes of their store. Soon shelves filled with both Southwest crafts and décor shared space with locally hand-crafted Amish goods.



Jake's wouldn't look so appealing and show off its wares so well without the lamps, linens, and curtains that Melissa so tastefully arranges throughout the store.

Ed and Melissa continued to see the business grow, with space again becoming an issue. There just wasn't room. Ed, as a temporary measure, placed certain oversized items out in the front lawn along the road until he could find more room. But the mix of outdoor statuary, garden items, and lawn furniture drew in more and more customers curious to see what else might be inside. Recognizing that the outdoor "advertising" didn't cost anything, the lawn in front of Jake's Country Trading Post has become a permanent welcoming calling card for the business!



As the patriarch at Jake's, Ed is always ready to help, but he has been known to take regular snack breaks during a long day. He's especially fond of Auntie Anne's pretzel mixes, whose famous founder Ed is happy to say has personally shopped at Jake's.



Shopping at Jake's is truly a breath of fresh air, thanks in part to Jackie's care of the extensive selection of exclusive Jake's candles! While test-sniffing a holiday spice candle might be fun, she's all business when it comes to making sure the shelves stay stocked.

second store front?), plus the outdoor area, are filled to the brim with local Amish-made furniture, crafts, foods, and quilts, as well as all sorts of gifts and Amish Country memorabilia. A few examples -- Heartwood Creek and Willow Tree collectibles, banners for all seasons, tin advertising signs, NFL logo merchandise, plush toys, and rooms filled with Christmas décor.

Jake's is simply a place where many very different shoppers can spend considerable time happily filling their shopping carts. Sturdy outdoor statuary rests beside beautiful country primitives. Next to lacey, fluffy things, awesome sports memorabilia, barware, and so much more can be found. The funny old tin signs even appear to be poking playful fun at passersby browsing the large selection of apparel.



Ever the serious sports fan -- or is that fanatic -- Jeremy is at his best arranging the huge selection of pro-sport emblazoned signs, blankets, pennants, and more. Come checkout Jeremy's Man Cave!

If you ask Ed to describe the business, he is likely to tell you that he operates "general craft stores." But, when you visit, you will see why this simple description doesn't begin to tell the story. The two buildings (did I neglect to mention that the growing business led to a

Filling tall orders of different tastes is just a way of life beyond these doors where shopping lists soon go from long to short. I can't wait to see what Ed and Melissa might next have "in store!" 



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Upcoming Holiday & Winter Events

NOTE: All phone area codes are 717 unless otherwise noted. Please call or check websites to confirm dates and times.

November 11 - December 31

"Miracle of Christmas"

Sight & Sound Living Waters Theatre
Strasburg, PA
800-377-1277 Sight-Sound.com

Thru November 12

"Me and My Girl"

November 17 - December 23

"Miracle on 34th Street"

Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre
Lancaster, 898-1900 DutchApple.com

Thru November (call for schedule)

Ghost Tours of Lancaster

Strasburg & Downtown Lancaster
Strasburg / Lancaster
687-6687 / 610-404-4678 GhostTour.com

November (see website for schedule)

"Poe Evermore"

December 1- December 23

"A Dickens of a Christmas"

Mount Hope Estate & Winery, Manheim
665-7021 PaRenFaire.com



November - January 1

Koziar's Christmas Village

plus Visit & Photo with Santa

Koziar's Christmas Village
(Fri.-Sun to Thanksgiving & every day after)
Bernville 610-488-1110
KoziarsChristmasVillage.com

November 25-27, December 3-4, 10-11, 17-18

"Santa's Paradise Express"

Strasburg Rail Road Strasburg
687-7522 StrasburgRailRoad.com

December 2-3

14th Annual Holiday Intercourse Celebration

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Miracle on 34th STREET

November 17 - December 23

Kris Kringle takes on the cynics among us in this musical adaptation of the popular holiday movie. A white-bearded gentleman claiming to be the real Santa Claus brings about a genuine miracle, spreading a wave of love throughout New York City, fostering camaraderie between Macy's and Gimbel's Department Stores, and convincing a cynical single mother, her curious daughter and the entire state of New York that Santa Claus and true happiness is no myth.

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The Largest Pet Store in the World!

Love pets? Then you may be interested to know that Lancaster is home to "The Largest Pet Store in The World." West of town on Centerville Road, just south of Route 30, is That Fish Place, That Pet Place. This huge store is easy to spot: just look for the giant shark over its entrance.

Family owned since it opened in 1973, this store has grown to become quite an attraction. It's worth a visit, whether you're a local or an out-of-town visitor. Besides having every kind of pet supply you can imagine, it's also a place to discover and explore.

First, some fun facts - you'll find a 110,000 sq. foot facility, over 100 employees, over 20,000 pet care supplies, over 35,000 gallons of displays, about 600 display tanks, and over 10,000 fish, invertebrates and coral.

More familiar pets can be found in the Critter Corner. Here, you'll see furry friends like rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, rats, ferrets and more. For those who fancy flight, drop in the Aviary and observe finches, cockatiels, parakeets, budgies, and more. Then explore the Fish Room. Hundreds of tanks of fascinating, unusual and colorful fish await you in the fresh and saltwater areas. The invertebrates, aquatic plants, corals, and live rock are especially interesting. It's almost like being at an aquarium for free!

In the store you'll find the popular hands-on marine life Pirate's Cove exhibit too, where kids of all ages can pet a stingray. Of course, this store not only sells pets, but all the supplies they need...products for your aquarium, pond, dog, cat, bird, reptile or small pet! They also promote dog and cat adoption with a Lancaster County Humane League adoption site right in the store.

You're welcome to bring your pet into the store to enjoy shopping with fellow pets and pet lovers. That Fish Place/That Pet Place is open 7 days a week. Also explore and shop online at www.thatpetplace.com.



Once you walk inside, a right turn takes you into the Reptile Room, home to critters that slither, crawl, and jump, such as snakes, turtles, frogs, lizards and tarantulas.



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December 12-13, 27-30

Christmas at the Cloister

Ephrata Cloister, Ephrata

733-6600 EphrataCloister.org

December 31

New Year's Eve Gala

Mount Hope Estate & Winery, Manheim

665-7021 PaRenFaire.com

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mennoniteinfoctr.com

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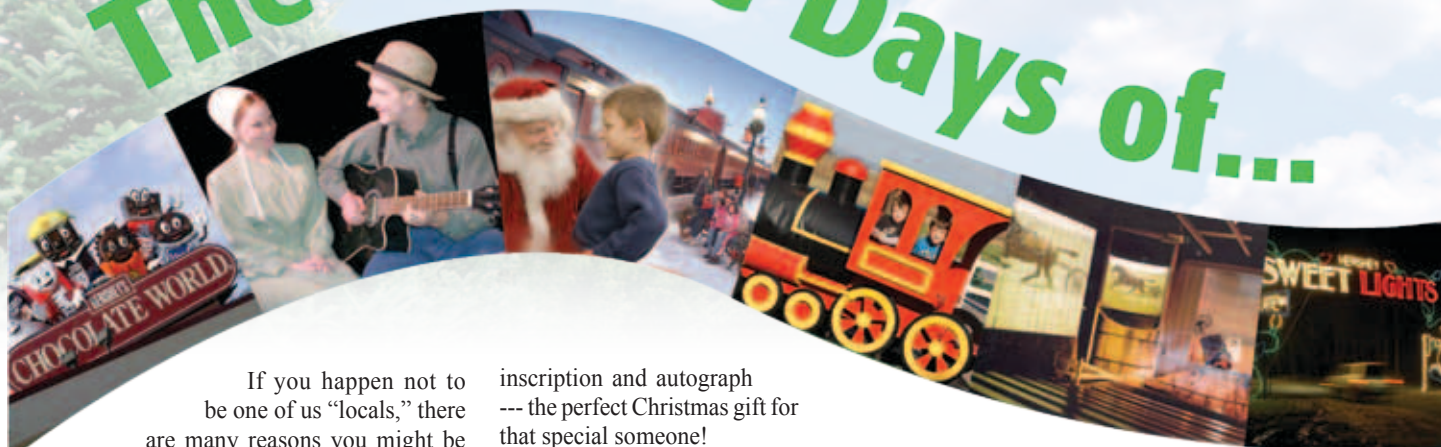
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The Twelve Days of...



If you happen not to be one of us “locals,” there are many reasons you might be in Amish Country this holiday season. Shopping certainly tops the list for many.

Where else can you find an Amish quillow just down the street from a (no-sales-tax-on-clothing) Adidas Outlet? But we are certainly far, far more than shopping, and I want to help you get into the spirit. Inspired by (and humming as I type) “The 12 Days of Christmas”, allow me to offer you some suggestions on things to do, whether here in Amish Country for one day, or twelve.

Day One - Author Signing & “Confession”

No doubt about it. Novels, especially romance, about the Amish are “hot” this wintry time of year (just take a look at the various publishers advertising in this issue). Before year-end we are fortunate to have several well-known authors coming to the area for book signings.

On November 18th, you’ll have two chances to meet three authors who are on a special **Amish Country Holiday Book Tour**. Top-selling Amish fiction authors Vannetta Chapman, Amy Clipston, and Shelley Shepard Gray will be at **Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant & Stage** for a book-signing luncheon. Afterwards, stay and enjoy “**The Confession**,” a love story musical that has come to Bird-in-Hand accompanied by rave reviews. The story is based on three novels by Beverly Lewis and runs through December 2.

For even more “face time” with these three prominent authors, join them for a progressive dinner at **Plain & Fancy Farm**, followed by presentations in the adjoining **Amish Experience Theater**, and concluding with desserts and signings in the **Amish Country Homestead**. I’ll be there with my copy of Shelley Shepard Gray’s “Christmas in Sugarcreek” for a personal

inscription and autograph --- the perfect Christmas gift for that special someone!

Day Two - Trains - Big

The holidays are special at the **Strasburg Rail Road** and the arrival of a particular visitor is the highlight of the season. You guessed it! Santa himself climbs aboard to visit with families as they travel down the tracks to Paradise and back. As a special treat, children three to eleven receive a gift from Santa and his helpers. After the ride on this authentic steam train, children are treated to storybook readings of holiday classics. All aboard **Santa’s Paradise Express** November 25 through December 18. Call for specific dates and times.

Day Three - Trains - Small

Model train layouts were always a very special part of my Christmas (see Publisher’s Message). We boast two great places to experience the special world of railroading in miniature. The **Choo Choo Barn** is celebrating its 50th year and the season features an enhanced holiday display from November 25 to December 31. What exactly makes the display different at this time of year? Well, for starters, look for 50 hidden Santas. Then watch as Santa’s sleigh flies above the gigantic model train display. Finally, you can enjoy the holiday decorations from end to end, including holiday lights and the snow-covered landscape.

The nearby **National Toy Train Museum** contains one of the most extensive toy train collections in the world. So whatever size train has been a part of your childhood, including trains that children pushed, pulled or rode upon, you’ll find it here, with trains from the mid-1800s through the present day. Each visitor has the opportunity to help operate the five train layouts. It’s a great way to introduce kids to the

hobby, and at this time of year you’ll find special Christmas decorations throughout the museum.

Day Four - Trees...

There are nearby destinations on your way to or from Amish Country that shouldn’t be missed. **Hershey’s Chocolate World** is the place to make your own candy bar and fill the trunk with stocking stuffers for the holidays. Be sure to see the annual Chocolate House and plan Breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus. And, a winter wonderland awaits at **Hershey Sweet Lights**, as you drive through two miles of wooded trails filled with nearly 600 illuminated, animated displays, November 18 to December 31.

Day Five - ...and More Lights

A true holiday tradition is a visit to **Koziar’s Christmas Village**. This display, which has received a national “Best Outdoor Christmas Display” award, had its origin back in 1948 when William Koziar started to decorate his home with lights. Each year he added more. Soon people were begging to come onto the property. Today, between November 5 and January 1, you’ll find over half a million lights covering the landscape and buildings around the pond that acts as a glistening mirror to the landscape of a winter wonderland. That view as you come up the hill and around the bend has been said to produce a “wow” from Scrooge himself!

Day Six - Dickens

Speaking of Scrooge, perhaps no author’s characters are more associated with the Christmas Holiday than those of Charles Dickens. And no interactive experience brings these characters

an Amish Country Christmas



to life better than the “**Dickens of a Christmas**” in the Victorian mansion at **Mount Hope Estate & Winery** through most of December. Here you’ll be invited to the Fezziwig’s Annual Christmas Party. Sing along with the Fezziwig children in “A Holiday Romance,” as they try desperately to stay awake. Catch a glimpse of Father Christmas, share holiday games and traditions with the jovial Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig in “A Christmas Dinner”, and rejoice in the spirit of the season in a memorable telling of “A Christmas Carol.” This is one event I’ve rarely missed and it’s been running for over 30 years! Like Dickens’ classic tale, it just doesn’t grow old. See page 50.

Day Seven - Santa on Stage

Looking for relaxing fun after shopping? Head to the Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre for “**Miracle on 34th Street**,” November 17 to December 23. Kris Kringle takes on the cynics in this musical adaptation of the popular holiday movie. A white-bearded gentleman claiming to be the real Santa Claus brings about a genuine miracle, spreading a wave of love throughout New York City, fostering camaraderie between competing department stores, and convincing everyone that the spirit of Christmas embodied in Santa Claus is indeed live and well.

Day Eight - The First Christmas

Lest we forget the reason for the season, celebrate and experience the birth of Christ and the biblical story of Christmas at **Sight & Sound Theatre’s** inspiring “**Miracle of Christmas**” from November 11 to December 31. This nationally renowned musical production, with spectacular wrap-around sets and live animals, in my humble opinion, rivals the venerable Radio City Music Hall’s production. Truly, Sight & Sound has become a tradition for tens of thousands of locals and visitors. Bring the

children early for an interactive meeting with cast members and animals they will see later on stage.

Day Nine - Town Tours

Many charming small towns dot our countryside. Several host special tours during which visitors can see the interiors of historic homes whose owners have gone all out to “deck the halls.” On December 4, I’d recommend the **46th Annual Marietta Candlelight Tour of Homes**. It’s one of the oldest, continuous Holiday Tours in Pennsylvania. The Smithsonian Associates have even organized bus tours to Marietta for this event. There is always a splendid array of private homes with open houses at public buildings...all for one day only!

Day Ten - Village Celebrations

Just as many towns host tours, many also stage their own elaborate community events. I’ve been a part of the special activities in the village of Intercourse over the years. This year, on December 2 and 3, the merchants welcome visitors to **Intercourse’s 14th Annual Holiday Celebration**. There are open houses, holiday musicians, a tree lighting, children’s treasure hunt, and an interactive live nativity. Donations of non-perishable food items are accepted to benefit the “Jars of Hope” at the Family Center of Gap.

Day Eleven - Christmas at Our State Museums

Our State museums always have special events and activities for the holidays. **Landis Valley Museum** and the **Ephrata Cloister** are two of my favorites. To hear the singing of the early hymns at the Cloister is really special, as are the **Cloister’s Lantern Tours** December 27 – 30, when we go back in time to the 1700’s as local students dramatically tell a story centered on events at the Cloister, on the very spot where it all happened.

Day 12 - All Christmas, All The Time

Your ultimate Christmas stop must surely be the **National Christmas Center** (see page 26). But remember, the Christmas Center is open year-round, so you can stop in any time to enjoy the exhibits, animated singing animals, walk-through Nativity, and Christmas displays from around the world, all designed to put you in the holiday mood, even when it’s 90 degrees on a humid summer day. But then, it’s always Christmas in Paradise! Hard to imagine it actually gets better for the holidays, but it does. 🐾

by Brad Igou

I hope I’ve planted some seeds from which a tall Spruce tree of ideas will grow to fill all the days of the Christmas Season here in Amish Country. With so much to see and do, you’ll remember the special Christmas memories made here with friends and family long after those wonderful presents have been opened and forgotten. Be sure to wish me a joyous “Happy Holidays!” if you happen to see me along the local holiday trails in Amish Country.



Meet The Tour Guides: From Working Wood To Guided Tours

by Clinton Martin



Sixteen years ago Joe Waldner took a tour guide position with Amish Country Tours at Plain & Fancy Farm, as a temporary job until "something more permanent came along that he might 'really want to do.'" Sixteen years and counting, it's THE job he loves!

Joe's first love was wood-working and even today when not touring he'll often be found in his woodshop at home. Joe grew up in New Jersey where he became an accomplished woodworker. Eventually he came to travel throughout the region delivering furniture to stores.

One fateful day while delivering in Amish Country, and taking a break to explore something "touristy," he stopped in at a shop in one of our quaint villages with a name visitors find humorous. There on the cashier's counter was a flier advertising a benefit sale at a nearby Amish farm.

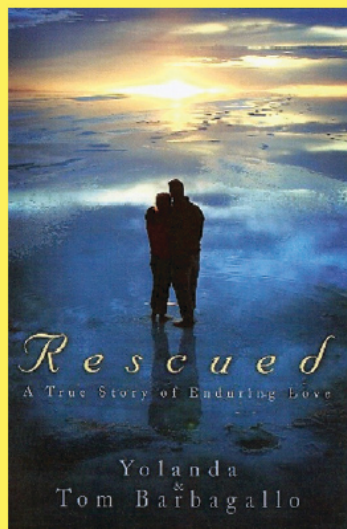
He saw the words "BBQ Chicken" and his stomach grumbled. He checked his watch, and indeed it was lunch time. He asked for

Continued on Page 13

Amish Adventure..

Review by Judy on 10/7/11 9:28 AM

Joe stepped onto our tour bus with a question. Did we want the tour as described or did we want an adventure? All 6 of us yelled "Adventure!" Joe then drove our tour bus over back roads between fields of corn, a schoolhouse, and a covered bridge. He explained the culture many of us were witnessing for the first time. Joe stopped the bus at a farm store and shared the seasoned pretzels. We were offered home-made rootbeer and blackberry juice. Joe was an amazing resource and eager to stop the bus to allow us to capture all that we saw with our cameras. The Home tour was also incredible! Being able to walk from room to room made it easy to imagine life on a daily basis within the well-constructed walls. I'm still astonished with the "home office" in the front yard. And I can't even imagine preparing a home for the community church service! Each person we met on these tours provided incredible knowledge while also answering our many questions. The entire atmosphere was warm and welcoming. We loved it more than we thought was possible!



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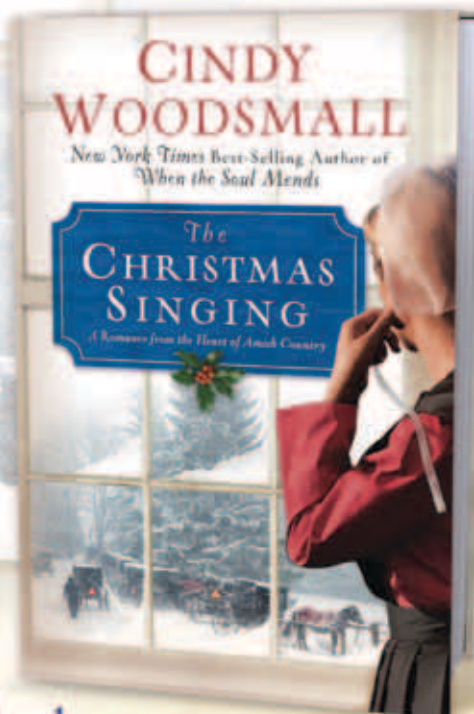
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Michelle

"I just finished reading your book and wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed it. You have a great way with detail and a terrific sense of humor. I laughed out loud about some of the things you and Tom laughed about together...I especially enjoyed your stories about your daughters and the children you fostered and could relate to all the job changes you both went through. What a life you have had! Thank you for sharing it with me."
Carol

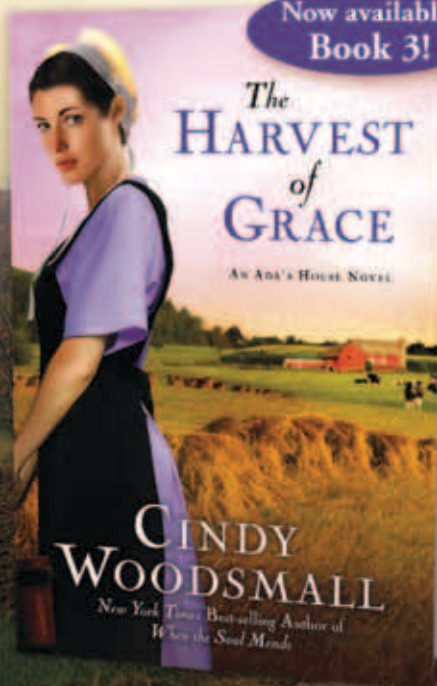
Spend Christmas with the Amish!

After Gideon coldly broke her heart, can the warmth of the season revive Mattie's hopes?

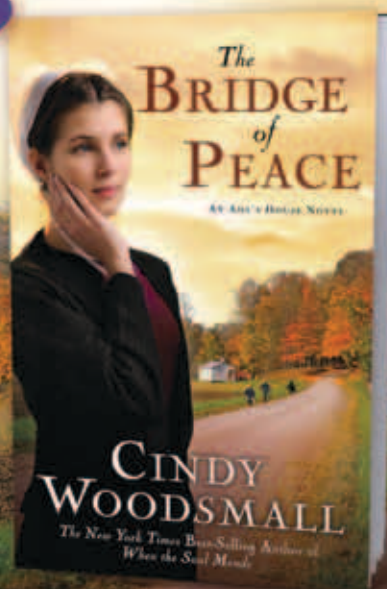


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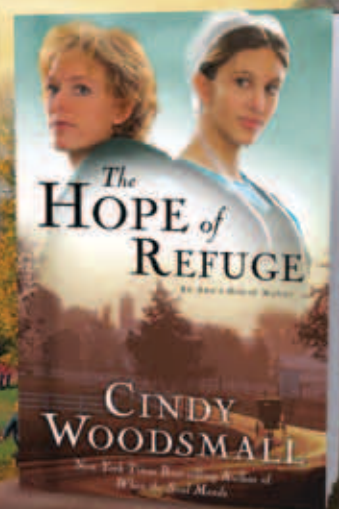
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Koziar's Christmas Village: "The Greatest Christmas Display In The USA" by Brad Igou

Koziar's Christmas Village is a spectacular holiday display located on Christmas Village Road, two miles off Route 183 in Bernville. It has been a well known, family owned, seasonal attraction since its founding by William M. Koziar in 1948. Every night the Koziar farm is transformed into a winter fairyland.

Driving through the darkened countryside, you will suddenly find yourself in a dazzling valley set aglow with more Christmas lights than you have ever seen before. Adding to the magnificent beauty is the spectacular reflection of those thousands and thousands of lights in the lake situated in front of the main house.

Visit the various buildings filled with Trim-the-Tree ideas, indoor and outdoor train displays, glass-enclosed buildings, and many shops filled with unique Christmas displays, ornaments, and souvenirs. Enjoy the aroma of freshly baked cookies in the Country Kitchen and browse in Santa's toy shop filled with unusual toys and gifts for children of all ages. See the unique hand-made train platform and follow the trains through the tunnels, across the trestles, around the miniature town located in the large Refreshment Barn. Come talk to Santa and his helpers, and see your favorite cartoon and fairy tale characters throughout the Village.

In its 60 year history, Christmas Village has received many awards, including Best Outdoor Christmas Display in the World, and the Award of Excellence as One of the Top Attractions in Pennsylvania. Visiting Christmas Village is truly like "Walking in a Winter Wonderland." You will take home many happy memories of an old-fashioned Christmas. 





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- 1948 E. Third St. Williamsport, PA
- Exton Square Mall, Exton, PA

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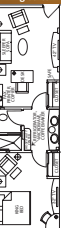
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NEW!

Two-Bedroom Suite



King Suite



Meet the Guide (Cont'd From Page 10)

directions from the clerk, and off he went in search of the auction, truckload of furniture and all.

He arrived at the farm, and quickly became immersed in the whole experience. The benefit sale was being held to help pay for the high medical bills of the family whose daughter had been born months premature. While enjoying his lunch, he stood by and watched the excited bidding on the many varied items that were on the auction block. He noticed some furniture had come up and sold at good prices.

Without really giving it much thought, he decided that some of the furniture from his shop that he had on his truck should go to help the cause. He asked some of the men to help him unload a couple pieces and the auctioneers started up again on Joe's donations with their familiar sing-song sales slang. The furniture sold well, adding significantly to the monies collected for the family. Joe felt so good about what he had done that he put more of his furniture on the block.

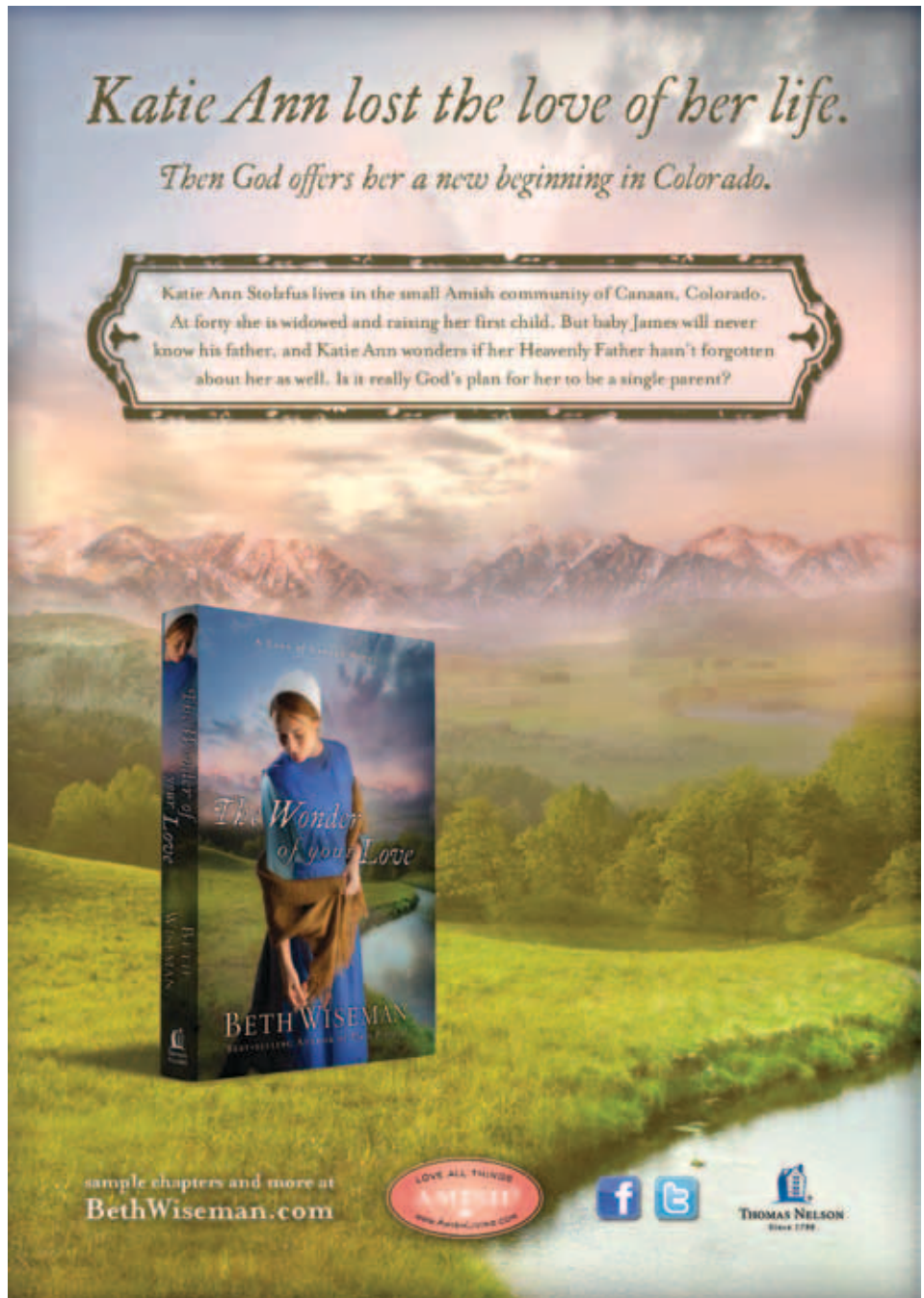
As he watched the bidding, he got to talking with an Amish family that was standing next to him. The woman of the family, "Aunt Mary" as she was known to everyone, eventually invited Joe to write to her when he got back home.

He did so, and he and his family ended up forging a friendship with Aunt Mary, her family and other Amish people. Joe continued to visit Amish Country. Soon he came to realize that he didn't want to be a visitor anymore, but wanted to move and live in the area.

After moving to Amish Country, he took a job working at a wonderful attraction which featured a collection of Americana-themed demonstrations, including a Colonial wood shop. Joe fit right in and was content working at his woodworking and living where he felt very much at home.

When the attraction was sold, Joe left searching for a new home for his woodworking skills when he happened to see a notice for a new tour guide class at Amish Country Tours. For him, this seemed ideal until he might find a new wood shop.

He quickly came to enjoy showing visitors around the farmlands. Over the years he has become as much an expert in his tour guiding as in his wood working. His relationships with Amish families, all starting from that fateful auction and meeting "Aunt Mary", have given him special insights that he eagerly shares with passengers on his intimate 14 passenger Amish Country Tours shuttle.



Since that auction day he has been invited to Amish weddings, family gatherings, social gatherings, and even Amish funerals for those whom he had come to know. He even has taken a side-job as an Amish taxi driver, taking and transporting men to and from their work at a local Amish woodshop.

As fortune would have it, moving here, sharing his affection of the area with others as he drives through the pristine Amish countryside, and keeping his love of woodworking close at hand have all served to deepen Joe Waldner's passions in ways he never dreamed possible. The sentiment on page ten of a passenger on one of Joe's tours

describes far better than I the impact Joe leaves on those lucky enough to tour with him. 

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is our pleasure, from time to time, to highlight guides who have been giving tours of Amish Country over the years. So many have such interesting stories. Their knowledge and understanding has enhanced the experiences of thousands of visitors.

Bid, Buy, Bargain!



Boutique Shopping!

by Clinton Martin

SHOPPING – Surely one of the most pleasurable of American pasttimes. It seems that so many of us have come to look back wistfully to the joys of Christmases past when the overwhelming commercialism of the Holidays could not even have been imagined. There's no denying it, this is the season when the cash registers ring loudest for our many retail stores and outlets. However, let us not think about what Christmas no longer offers us, but rather the pure joy of filling the trunk with gifts for family and friends. Nothing sinister about that and, in Amish Country we do make every shopper's dream come true!

From Lancaster City to our small towns and villages and throughout the countryside, you'll be among the ranks of amateur Santas scouring local shops and outlets for stocking-stuffers. No matter how unusual your shopping list, chances are you can fill it in Amish Country... perhaps at a unique, family-owned shop specializing in wares you can only find here. These may well be at the shops of Amish and Mennonite craftsmen producing quilts, crafts, and even playground equipment. But, make no mistake, the small towns dotting the Amish countryside boast local merchants of all types showcasing unique and interesting collections.

Downtown Lancaster, the vibrant and hip urban city at the center of Amish Country, has transformed former industrial glory into classy art districts, where contemporary artists produce creative paintings and sculptures next to traditional folk artists. Juried craft shows add to the arts

scene, with the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen headquartered right in the city. These visual and textural arts provide hours of prime shopping. But wait...there's more. Dozens of fashionable boutiques await exploration as part of your Holiday indulgence. Yes, Virginia it's true – in Amish Country there's plenty more than straw hats and corn-cob pipes to fill Christmas Stockings!

Here's a tip – at lunch time when shopping downtown Lancaster, plan on enjoying a bite to eat at the very cool **Lancaster Brewing Company**, located at the intersection of Plum and Walnut streets. One more – since store hours are extended for the Holidays, you owe yourself an early gift with dinner at **Gibraltar**, Lancaster's top rated Zagat restaurant. Call 717-397-2790 for reservations.

Other small towns in Amish Country are famous not for their trendiness, but rather for their charm and quaintness. Two-lane country roads wind from village to village, connecting one bring-a-smile-to-your-face named town to the next. Such is the case with the villages of Bird-In-Hand and Intercourse. The two perhaps best epitomize Amish Country as the vast majority of residents are plain-dressed, buggy-driving folk. Amish, Mennonite, and other Anabaptist families provide holiday shoppers with a miles-long list of family-owned country stores and craft barns ripe for exploration. Hand-sewn quilts at **Esh Handmade Quilts** wave in the breeze along Route 340 just east of Intercourse. In Bird-In-Hand, pies come steaming out of the ovens at the **Bird-In-Hand Bake Shop** on Gibbons Road almost as quickly as holiday shoppers can snatch them up.

Another small Amish Country village beckons visitors with a more distinct calling card – the billowing puffs of smoke gently rising into the sky overtop everyone's favorite not-really-a-toy-train **Strasburg Railroad**. Yes, Strasburg is Train Town USA, and you can imagine the amazing variety of train-themed shopping you'll find at the likes of the **Choo Choo Barn**, the **National Toy Train Museum**, and the **Strasburg Railroad's depot**. Of course, Strasburg's historic village square houses many specialty shops ranging from antiques, to artisan coffees, and even an ice cream gallery with its own wine shop. Different for sure, but definitely fun.

Sometimes the names of our villages, which often visitors find amusing, can really be straight forward. Take New Holland for instance with its roots dating back to the 18th century Dutch. New Holland, and the nearby and closely connected village of Blue Ball, combine to create a cornucopia of shopping sensations. From **Yoder's Country Market** which houses, in many ways, a



Craft Shopping!

“throw-back” market with its own milk bottling line (buy a gallon in a real glass bottle and pick up a pail of delicious ice cream made on site), a flower and gift shop, and of course the famous, and delicious, buffet. The scale rises from there to the mammoth Shady Maple complex. Here shoppers find grocery items, specialty foods, a grand gift shop, even a country general store and the impressive **Country Home Furniture** outlet. Smaller shops specializing in apparel, curiosities, even cured meats and cheeses can all be found dotting the Shady Maple map.

To miss the village of Lititz would be a real shame, as the variety of retail pleasures there offered is definitely unique and impressive. Keep your eyes open as you head east down Main Street. When you see a five foot tall pretzel off to the left, hit the brakes! You've arrived at **Julius Sturgis Pretzel Bakery**, and it is time to shop for holiday gift tins filled with tasty pretzel snacks from America's oldest pretzel bakery.

The many wonderful shopping villages across our countryside are literally too numerous to mention. So, how does a savvy Amish Country shopper make the most of his time? Rely on Amish Country News, of course!

• Give Food! • • • • •

A good place to start is the soil itself. Before there were stores, there were fields. Amish, Mennonite, and other conservative religious groups settled here because of the productive fields, and I am pleased to say some of those same families, generations later, are still harvesting the bounty.

It's a totally cool and welcome gift to bring a freshly made pie or cake to a holiday gathering of friends or family. So, even if visions of sugarplums are not dancing in your head, a visit to one of our many local bake shops is in order. A free taste of Amish Country's most famous pie awaits you at **Dutch Haven**, the place that made Shoo-Fly Pie famous and probably the most recognizable landmark in the area. Just look for the big yellow windmill on Route 30, only five minutes or so east of the outlets. The pies hold up to travel, but if

Shopping in Amish Country!

you don't have room in your shopping cart, Dutch Haven will gladly ship your pie home.

For some (not me, of course), Shoo-Fly Pie is awfully sweet. For a savory, yet definitely sugary indulgence, try an Amish Country original – Whoopie Pies. Better yet, try many of them, and make a game of choosing your personal favorite. Modestly priced, and easily carried around, these little snacks are Amish Country's "street food."

Call ahead to our Whoopie Pie specialists, and ask what flavors are coming out of the oven today.

Bird-In-Hand Bake Shop • 717-656-7947

Countryside Road Stand • 717-656-9206

Miller's Smorgasbord Bakery • 717-687-6621

Hershey Farm Restaurant • 717-687-8635

Now, if you've unwrapped all the whoopie pies you can handle for one vacation, you can certainly move on to your next tasty adventure. While the sweet taste of chocolate cake and butter cream lingers in your mouth, mark your calendar for Saturday September 15, 2012 when **Hershey Farm Restaurant & Inn** hosts the **Annual Whoopie Pie Festival**, an amazing event dedicated to having fun with the delightful little cakes. Read more at www.whoopiepiefestival.com.

Of course, Amish Country isn't only famous for originating delicious baked goods, our skilled apron-clad great grandmas and grandpas also enjoyed perfecting treasured treats from all over the Country. Sticky buns may be found in any corner of the United States, but I guarantee you the best you've ever tasted are waiting for you right here in Amish Country. Actually, they are waiting for you in a food truck in Amish Country! **Mr. Sticky's Homemade Sticky Buns** actually parks its wheeled bakery in the parking lot of the PA Dutch Convention and Visitors Bureau. While you're picking up brochures and stretching your legs, why not let a maple glazed, peanut buttery, pecan encrusted sticky bun melt in your mouth? Call for today's flavors at 717-413-9229.

To those for whom the craving of meat and potatoes rules the taste buds, there is no need to fret. Amish Country cooks up plenty of delicious, meaty treats too. Try the delicious **Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies**, easily saved away for your family holiday gathering in your own cooler, or shipped directly to your door from www.bestoflanastercounty.com. If you could make them this tasty at home, you might try. Why bother? It's also a treat to go to Zook's at 3194 Harvest Drive, Ronks. Turn south on Route 340 onto Old Leacock Road, and then right onto Harvest Drive.

While you're turning onto Old Leacock Road, I encourage you to make a stop at the **Lancaster Beer & Wine Gallery**, housed in an historic barn at the intersection. Here you can sample local craft beers from the Rumspringa brewing company, and enjoy fine wines from Mount Hope Winery. Especially timely for the holidays, you can purchase wonderful gift packs of both wine and beer. The staff of Amish Country News already has stocked up on four-packs of 22 oz. bottles of Rumspringa beer (the artwork on the bottles is collectable on its own).

What goes better with wine and beer than a good flavorful cheese? It isn't surprising that Amish Country has cheese-mongers, but it is surprising we have one, **September Farm Cheese**, that is winning rounds in the competition ring against the likes of Wisconsin's best. Just in time for the holidays, the **Town Clock Cheese Shop** in Gap is expanding their selection, already amazing, by hundreds of cheeses. You can spend as little, or as much time and money as you want at this lovely shop. You can try to buy some without tasting it, but proprietor Bill Houder will tell you why you should enjoy a free sample first! Call 717-442-9090 for hours and directions.

To round out your sweet, salty snack trail visit another of our area's pretzel factories. In truth, these "factories" are more akin to artisan bakeries. Enjoy some yourself, or fill a decorative holiday tin for a classic gift. One of our favorite twisters of hand-made dough is the **Intercourse Pretzel Factory**, 717-768-3432.

By now you're probably thinking we are coming to the end of our tasty gift options, but 'tis not so. The evidence is in the sampling – or more specifically, time well spent strolling the floor of the **Intercourse Canning Company**. This shrine to all things jam, jelly, pickles, and dip is a perfect place to check off many an item on gift-giving lists. The Canning Company's jarred goods look, smell, and taste great. You can even see them canning the day's produce. Call ahead to see what they are "putting up." 717-768-0156.

Right about now, many of you are thinking while it is fine and good to munch and crunch your way



Antique Shopping!

through Amish Country, what about the home-chef? The handyman or woman of cuisine? Well, if you happen to be one of those who enjoy creating and baking yourself, we've got your headquarters nearby. It's the **Good Cooking Store** (where Phylis Pellman Good of "Fix It and Forget It" fame calls home) in the village of Intercourse for all the best kitchen gadgets, enlightening classes, and stylish cookware. Call 717-768-3032 for store hours.

The gift of food served up with a pretty Amish Country bow now complete, let's move on to other traditional Amish gifts. After all, a visit to Amish Country without taking in the colorful beauty of a hand-made quilt would be sacrilege.

• Give Quilts! • • • • •

Amish Country has the greatest selection of one-of-a-kind, hand-made quilts you'll ever find. Dozens of shops, ranging from the living room of an Amish farmhouse, to larger full-service showrooms display quilts ranging from crib-sized to king-sized. The quilts each vary in price almost as much as style, primarily dependent upon the number of hours of patient stitching that went into its completion.

Finding a warm quilt to hand down from generation to generation is only as hard as finding the best quilt shops! Luckily, we're here to lead you to the very best.



Furniture Shopping!



Food Shopping!

Old Country Store – In the village of Intercourse. 800-828-8218. This quilt shop not only sells quilts, but houses a quilt museum on site, displaying dazzling quilts from very traditional antique Amish styles to today's most out-there concepts.

B&K Country Quilts – 40 S. Charlotte St. in Manheim, 717-664-7600. When you find this shop, you've come upon a gem. The shop packs racks full of interesting fabric. Of course you'll see finished crafts, but truly this is a crafter's headquarters.

Riehl's Quilts – 247 Eby Rd. Leola, 717-656-0697. You might think you're driving onto an Amish family's dairy farm, putt-putting down the lane to park next to the barn. Well, that is exactly what you'll be doing, but you'll also be coming upon a wonderful quilt and craft store with dozens of hand-made quilts.

Dutchland Quilt Patch – Two locations! Call 717-687-0534 or 717-768-3981. If one fine selection of absolutely beautiful handmade quilts is awesome, double it and you double your shopping pleasure! Dutchland Quilt Patch has two locations, one in Intercourse and one in Ronks. The quilts are gorgeous, but don't feel bad if you get distracted by the hooked rugs.

Esh Handmade Quilts – One mile east of Intercourse on Route 340. 717-768-8435. The water pump house out front of the farmhouse usually has a quilt or two hanging from the line, so keep your eyes open for this tiny taste of what's in store for you in the Esh family's home (which doubles as the showroom).

Esh Valley Quilts – Minutes east of Strasburg on Route 741, 717-442-8123. Coming up the lane off Route 741 just east of Strasburg feels at first like you are pulling into someone's driveway. Well, you just have, as the Esh Valley Quilts storeroom is in their welcoming and sunny walk-in basement. Truly, you are a guest at the family's home at the same time you're a customer looking at marvelous locally made quilts.

Lapp's Quilts – East on N. Star Rd., 3 miles North of Strasburg. 717-687-8889 ext. 1. I love the sound of the ancient wooden floorboards softly creaking under foot as you walk throughout the

spacious converted barn. This is an especially good stop for those looking for wall-hanging quilts and table runners.

J&B Quilts – East on N. Star Rd., 3 miles North of Strasburg. 717-687-8889 ext. 3. This store harkens back to the beginnings of the quilt business in Amish Country. Small, tucked out of the way, and displaying only painstakingly hand-made quilts in sublime color patterns.

Smucker's Quilts – 1 mile N. of Route 23 on Groffdale Road. 717-656-8730. A long drive down the lane has you wondering if you'll ever get to see quilts, and then suddenly you round the turn and there, almost out of a storybook, stands the shop right in front of you. The skylights let in lots of sunshine; all the better to scour through hundreds of quilts. Who needs electric lights to showcase a quilt that never saw an electric sewing machine?

Witmer Quilt Shop – Route 23 between Leola and New Holland. 717-656-9526. If you're a frequent visitor to Amish Country, this may well be the quilt shop you know. In business for over 40 years, they have amassed not only an amazing skill for picking out the very best quilts, but also a great knack for matching a customer with the just the right quilt.

• Give Furniture! •••••

Exhausted by the search for the best in Amish bedding? You could shop for the bed instead. Amish Country counts family-owned furniture shops almost as numerous as we do farms. Amish and Mennonite craftsmen have long worked at turning quality hardwood into fine pieces of furniture, appealing to tastes both traditional and otherwise.

For instance, the hardworking men at **Fisher's Quality Furniture** on Newport Road just north of Intercourse are well known near and far for all kinds of chairs and benches, especially their handsome deacon's benches. Call 717-656-4423 for hours.

Along Route 30, in the village of Kinzers, you'll find **Wolf Rock Furniture**. The front of the building is a tastefully laid out showroom, while the back of the building is the actual work shop where furniture pieces are crafted by hand. These Amish entrepreneurs have created their own line of furniture, the Royal American Ensemble. You owe it to yourself to view this elegant collection. Wolf Rock can be reached at 717-442-8990.

Among some of the more unique items I've seen at local furniture makers would be the trash bins and kitchen islands at **Peaceful Valley Amish Furniture**. Peaceful Valley has locations in Strasburg and Intercourse. Visit www.peacefullvalleyfurniture.com for details.

For perhaps the widest and most varied selection, you've got to go to **Country Home Furniture**. This store brings the fine work of many of the area's craftsmen together in a nicely appointed

collection of pieces. They also are specialists in crafting custom orders. Choose your wood, stain, hardware, and even fabric. Call 717-354-2329 for hours and directions.



Quilt Shopping!

• Give the Unexpected! •••••

If the notion of quilts, crafts, and baked goods has not been the most interesting of shopping subjects, yet you've stayed with me thus far, I would like to thank you, and also tell you not to worry. Amish Country satisfies other shopping tastes as well!

Step into **Killer Hats** on route 30 in Paradise, and you'll be blown away by the extreme fashions for ladies, gentlemen, cowboys, bikers, and scoundrels. The selection teems with hats, western wear, biker gear, boots, belts, and even rock star styles. This isn't playing Amish dress-up, this is the place to hook yourself up with the coolest leather looks you can handle. Killer Hats is located four miles east of the outlets in the village of Paradise. Call 866-443-7279 for hours and directions.

Country Knives is the place to go if you are looking for a special, unique, and very "sharp", gift. Of course they have knives, and thousands of them at that, but they also sport elegant razors that any gentleman would appreciate receiving, durable professional grade scissors and shears for those in or out of the beauty business. Plus you'll also find kitchen necessities like cleavers, and the heavy butcher's block they're made for, and knives for every other cooking use you can imagine. Oh, and one more thing – they feature collectible swords too! Follow the big yellow signs on Route 340; the store is located minutes east of Intercourse.

Those with pets, or those who just love animals, can find the perfect gift at **That Fish Place, That Pet Place**. This way-more-than-a-pet-store displays an unmatched selection of pet and animal merchandise throughout 110,000 square feet of space. You'll even find free animal exhibits, including an aviary, a touch-tank full of stingrays, and a reptile habitat room. The store is easy to spot – look for the giant shark popping out of the

Continued on Page 39



Many people think the Amish do not pay taxes. They do. However, the Amish are currently exempt from paying Social Security taxes. This was not always so. The background of the "Amish Exemption" is filled with drama, clashes with the government, issues of religious freedom, politics, and much more. In writing this five-part series, I was privileged to have access to many original materials and personal letters.

Part 5: The Amish "Fight Back"

While Social Security was called a tax and administered by the Internal Revenue Service beginning in the 1950's, it was also clearly described as a form of old age and survivors insurance. In a 1961 IRS press release, the IRS did acknowledge the Amish stance that "Social Security payments, in their opinion, are insurance premiums and not taxes. They, therefore, will not pay the 'premium' nor accept any of the benefits."

The dispute came to the public's attention after the IRS seized the horses of a Pennsylvania Amishman, Valentine Byler, to pay for the back Social Security taxes he had owed and refused to pay. The horses, of course, were critical to Mr. Byler's ability to prepare his fields, do his planting, reap the harvest, and earn a basic living.

After Mr. Byler's situation drew national attention, meetings were held with various state and federal officials and Amish leaders. At a September, 1961 meeting with the Commissioner of the IRS in Washington DC, Amish bishops cited several Bible passages, including 1 Timothy 5:8, which states, "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel."

The printed petition submitted by the Amish read in part...

We, as representatives of the Old Order Amish Mennonite Church, do herein express our deep appreciation, and with grateful hearts do we recount the favors and consideration accorded our forefathers in the past...

We believe in a supreme being and also the constitution of the USA, and we feel the Social Security Act and Old Age Survivors Insurance (OASI) is abridging and infringing to our religious freedom. We believe in giving alms in the church according to Christ's teaching.

It has been our Christian concern from birth of our church group to supply those of our group who have a need, financial or otherwise... Our faith has always been sufficient to meet the needs as they come about, and we feel the present OASI is an infringement on our responsibilities; as a church we feel grieved that this OASI has come upon us...

We Bishops, representatives of the Old Order Churches of the USA, are appealing to you to prayerfully consider and reconsider this favor. In God we trust.

In the end, it was decided the Amish would seek an exemption based on the First Amendment. The IRS would stop further seizures until the case was settled. Senators present at the meeting committed to trying to pass a bill in Congress that would address the Amish concerns. However, what actually transpired was that a "moratorium" on enforcing the collection of Social Security taxes from the Amish came into effect.

The Amish seriously considered a court case, and even hired a lawyer, in a move uncharacteristic with their religious beliefs. As the court date approached, they wrestled with their convictions and decided to drop the case, opting instead to pursue a legislative exemption.

Further meetings and public reaction, mainly in support of the Amish, continued through the year 1964. And so it came to pass that in 1965, the Medicare bill was approved by Congress. As Wayne Fisher writes in The Amish in Court, "Tucked into the 138 page bill was a clause exempting the Old Order Amish, and any other religious sect who conscientiously objected to insurance, from paying Social Security payments, providing that sect had been in existence since December 31, 1950. After Senate approval in July, the signing of the bill by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 13, 1965, made it official and canceled tax accounts of some 15,000 Amish people amounting to nearly \$250,000."

What then became of Valentine Byler, who had suddenly been thrust into the limelight? According to Wayne Fisher, "On May 3, 1965, Mr. Byler fell from a grain drill while working in his field and broke his neck. While he lay very sick in a hospital bed in the front room of his farmhouse, the news of the passage of the bill, for which he had become a symbol, brought only a flicker of a smile from his face framed within his red beard."

Surely, there are lessons for all of us from Mr. Byler's story and the conviction of the Amish leaders who successfully fought to preserve their fundamental religious beliefs. During this most blessed of all seasons when there is so much to give thanks for, why not take a moment and reflect upon what it may all mean to you. 

Read the entire Amish Series at www.amishnews.com



MCC THRIFT SHOPS

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"Gifts That Make A Difference"

by Clinton Martin

The spirit of the holiday season encourages us to take time to reflect on the needs of others. Some seek to strengthen ties with their families. Others, through their churches or simply on their own, reach out to help those less fortunate, often complete strangers. While the holiday season is maligned for its commercialism and seeming greed, it is certainly not all bad and, in fact, in terms of mankind's good will there is much to rejoice about.

It is a real joy for us at Amish Country News that our Holiday/Winter issue should shine a light on the valuable work quietly

going on under the radar throughout Amish Country under the auspices of the locally headquartered Mennonite Central Committee. The MCC (as it is fondly known by many) may call Amish Country its home base of operations, but the humanitarian causes it supports reach out to every corner of the Globe.

The Mennonite Central Committee was formed in July of 1920 when various Mennonite congregations met, pledging to aid hungry people in Russia and Ukraine. From its earliest days, the MCC was meant to have a global focus.

Today, the MCC is active in countless countries, supporting access to education, peaceful resolution of world conflict, and an overriding mission of ending hunger. In Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique the MCC is building "sand dams" that filter and store water for use in communities formerly unable to sustain farming. The Central Committee not only provides support and funding for building materials and tools, but its members themselves roll up their sleeves to break stone, haul water, mix concrete and whatever it takes to help a far away community in desperate need.

In Honduras, the MCC is working to improve rural education through its Global Family Education Sponsorship program. Young students receive scholarship funds for schooling, uniforms, and supplies. In the end, an entire family benefits from one child's education. In Africa, especially in Uganda, the MCC is helping the fight against the AIDS epidemic. Better medicines, education, and cultural awareness lend support to tens of thousands struggling to treat, manage and control the disease.

In schools throughout Zambia, the MCC has established "Peace Clubs", extracurricular meetings that promote non-violent conflict resolution, with locally trained counselors on



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hand to mediate disputes between students, teachers, and even family members. The world's newest country formed just in July of this year, South Sudan, has become the site of an MCC aide outpost where volunteers hope to heal scars from the ravages of a bitter and brutal civil war.

Drawing from some of Amish Country's expertise in farming methods has allowed the MCC to help previously impoverished families begin organic, free range agricultural projects in Palestine.

These are but a few of the worldwide efforts of the MCC. Closer to home the MCC is equally hard at work. In the United States, the MCC has developed a pro-peace program called "Fear Not: Seek peace in our homes, communities, and world."

Actually much of the money generated for supporting the MCC's efforts comes from our own backyards. MCC benefit sales, most notably its quilt auctions, are a common way for local chapters to raise money. Just recently, a quilt named "Plain & Fancy" that saw the collective hands of over 100 Amish and Mennonite women sold at an MCC sale for \$9,000. But a \$9,000 quilt is only a drop in the bucket when it comes to filling the MCC coffers.

Over 12 million dollars of the MCC's annual budget comes from an unexpected source, a network of MCC Thrift Shops throughout this country and Canada. The largest concentration of MCC Thrift Shops is right here in PA (19 shops) and the largest concentration in PA is, of course, right here in Amish Country (six shops).

OK, this is now a blatant pitch for your help. Why not allow this Holiday season to be the start of a new tradition for your family. Visit an MCC Thrift Shop and choose alternative gifts that support humanitarian causes. Your purchase can help one more child attend school, one more family put food on the table...one more community find peace.

Each MCC Thrift Shop is independently owned and operated. They all share the vision of the MCC. This shopping is an adventure in and of itself and you'll find six very different specialty shops very nearby.

The Re-Uzit Shop of New Holland has a wide selection of recycled treasures, with clothing for all family members, quilts, books, pictures and artwork, fabrics, crafts. Especially notable is the year-round Christmas Room. In Strasburg, the Main Street Closet is virtually bursting with gently

used clothing and household items with a selection of children's clothes well worth exploring.

The town of Ephrata has two thrift shops supporting the MCC, one specializing in furniture, the other in new-to-you clothing, collectibles, and house wares. Visit the shop on State Street for rocking chairs, stools, and more. Head to the Main Street shop for nostalgic toys, great clothing, and knickknacks. For the best in crafts, fabrics, and linens, you've got to get to the Morgantown thrift shoppe with its impressive and extensive selection of glassware.

Learn more about the MCC at www.mcc.org. For information about the MCC Thrift Shop network, visit www.thrift.mcc.org. Know that while you are filling your shopping bag, at the same time, you are extending an important helping hand to a very worthy cause. 

After all, when Scrooge found the real meaning of the Holiday that fateful Christmas Eve, and Tiny Tim told us "God Bless Us, Every One", were we not reminded well to keep the spirit alive each and every day of the year? Here's hoping we do just that!

Welcome to New Holland • Blue Ball

The instability in Europe in the late 1600's spawned and nurtured the pioneer interest in the deep forest lands of Pennsylvania — 60 miles inland from Philadelphia. In 1681 William Penn received his 40,000 square-mile land grant to settle King Charles' debt to his father. Himself a Quaker, Penn had experienced religious persecution firsthand, and decided to establish his American colony based on complete religious freedom.

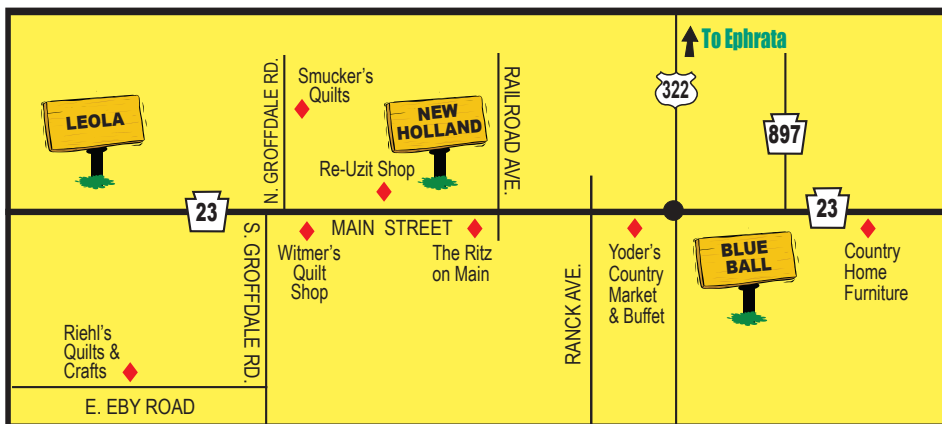
This entire century had been one of continued misery for the peasants of the Palatinate (western Germany). The Thirty Years War had raged across the area with barbaric ruthlessness. The peasant inhabitants fled to nearby Holland for refuge. And within a decade of the end of that conflict, King Louis XIV of France started a new religious war in the same general area. These Palatinate peasants were exhausted by war's desolation, and were ripe for a new start. Traveling land agents for William Penn's new colony found willing ears. In addition to religious freedom and a peaceful existence, Penn offered cheap land. The stated price was 100 English pounds for 5,000 acres. (At today's rate exchange, this would be less than \$.04 an acre). By the year 1702, a goodly number of Palatinates had immigrated to Pennsylvania, and Queen Anne, newly reigning in England, was delighted that Penn was colonizing his immense grant without drawing off the population of Britain.

The area today called New Holland was practically covered by virgin forests—sturdy timbers of oak, ash, chestnut, and walnut. By 1728, William Penn had been dead for 10 years and his American colony, called Pennsylvania, was being administered by a proprietary governor while the sale of land was formalized by patent deeds.

In 1802, when a post office was established and an official name was necessary, there was no dissension to naming the town New Holland.

These grateful people remembered how extremely kind the inhabitants of Holland were to them, with assistance thought to have included funds to cover the cost of the refugee German immigrants' ocean voyage.

This was no small matter when the alternative was indentured service for a period of years. For adults, indenture frequently meant four to seven years of labor without pay. Minors served until their 21st birthday. But still, William Penn's Quaker Pennsylvania was a liberation compared to the Europe they fled seeking freedom of religion, assembly and speech to all, hopefully, none of which we take for granted today.



Puttin' on the Ritz (in New Holland)

by Clinton Martin

Driving through New Holland, you can't help but notice the impressive Ritz on Main. When you see the marquee lights towering over the sidewalk, you instantly think "theater" and, in fact, the building was built as a theater, but the fortunes of the flicks didn't pan out. The very good news is that the grand story of the Ritz is now entering a new and exciting chapter.

Owner Todd Hauck is definitely not new to the restaurant business. He actually comes to the Ritz on Main off the heels of a 25 year career supervising the kitchens at a well-known local restaurant. Committed to preparing all of the entrees, soups, sauces, sandwiches, platters, and desserts in-house, his challenge was to knock people's socks off with his food.

It was lunchtime, I was hungry and decided to order up the day's special to review for our Holiday Issue. The first thing that arrived was a thirst-quenching glass of locally crafted "Hop Devil Ale" from Victory Brewing Company in Downingtown. The brewery is located so close to Amish Country that the tawny brown liquid barely knew the back of a truck before it slipped gracefully from the tap into my glass.

Just then, a sizzling serenade announced the arrival of my food. I soon discovered a hearty cheese steak

Continued on Page 22



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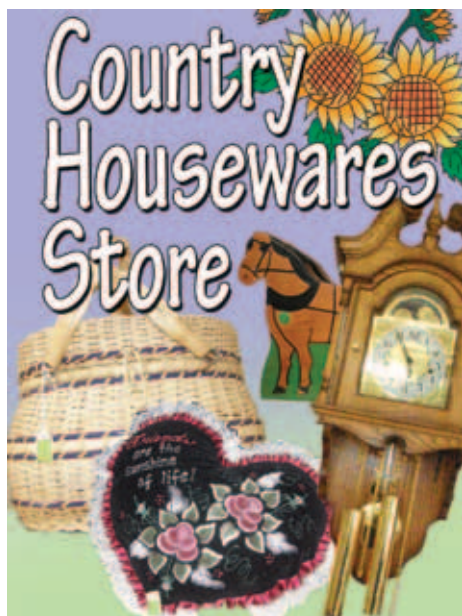
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Putting on the Ritz (Cont'd From Page 21)

was to be the perfect companion to my delightful Victory ale. On first glance, I took in the generous portion of thinly sliced succulent beef, scanned over the glistening chips of freshly carved potato fries, and then smiled as I saw a juicy wedge of pickle which would be my desert.

I decided that we were far enough from Philadelphia to make our own Amish Country mark on the cheese steak, so I eagerly sunk my teeth into this mound of sauced meat, cheese and bread, anxious to discover how this new twist on a regional favorite would stand up. I enjoyed the taste of the bread which had soaked up the juices of the beef without getting soggy – sort of a French Dip add-on with my meal. The beef had a tasty, real flavor. The great American hereford would be proud. I then considered the American cheese. It had melted, almost translucent, and added a mild, yet assertive dimension. I had now distilled my cheese steak down to its most basic parts.

The fries themselves were equally tasty. They were real potatoes, sliced off an honest-to-goodness spud, skins and all. I enjoyed their clean, unprocessed taste so much, I left the ketchup bottle untouched.

So with a contented sigh, I finished the last bite of my mid-day meal, enjoyed the last swallow of my Victory and looked forward to my next visit to The Ritz On Main, when I'll sample the dinner fare. The Ritz is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner. Call ahead for reservations: 717-351-7489. 

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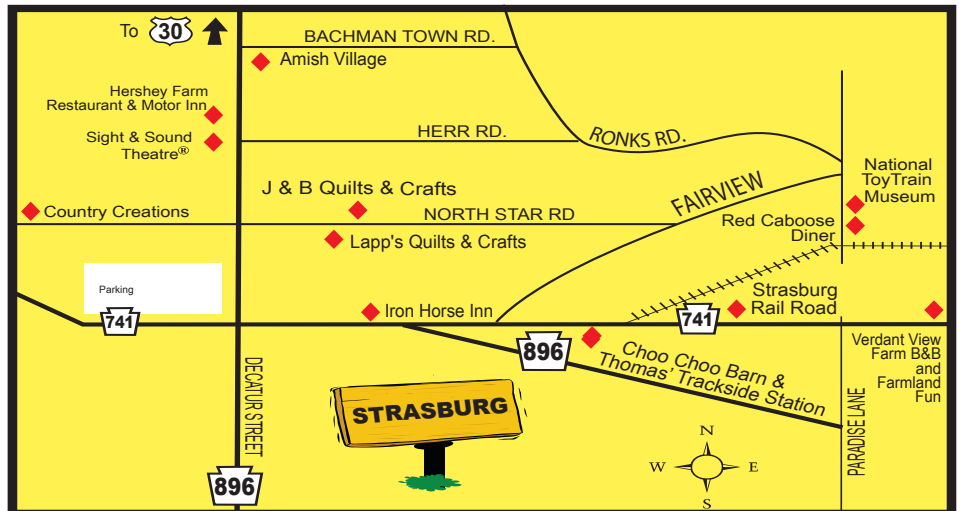
All aboard! Strasburg is a major destination all its own in PA Dutch Country, and home to many well known attractions. To name just a few --- the Strasburg Rail Road, Sight & Sound Theatres, Ghost Tours of Lancaster, Cherry Crest Adventure Farm, National Toy Train Museum, and the Choo Choo Barn. But you may not know much about the interesting history of this town...

Strasburg, named for the city in France, was actually "founded" by a Frenchman, Pierre Bezaillon, who traded with the Delaware Indians. The story goes he came to the area in 1693, as French fur traders opened up the first path through this area from Philadelphia to the Susquehanna River.

As early as 1716, when the first wagon was used for hauling goods, the path became known as the Conestoga Road, and the wagons that traveled them eventually became known as Conestoga Wagons. Main Street Strasburg was developed during the next half century as traffic on this road increased considerably and the first log houses appeared in the village about 1733.

Strasburg continued to flourish in the 18th century primarily because of its location along the major

Continued on Page 24



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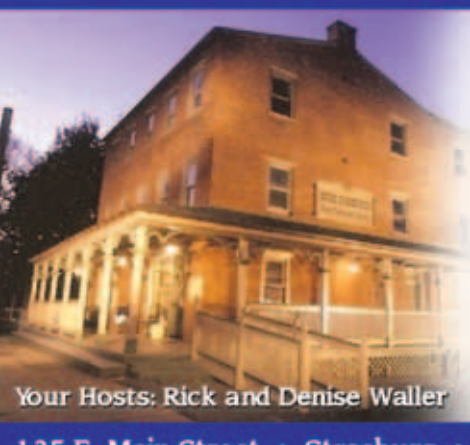
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Strasburg (Cont'd From Page 23)

wagon routes between Philadelphia, Lancaster, and the Susquehanna River.

As Strasburg flourished, so did its neighbor to the east, Philadelphia. The commercial interests of Philadelphia pressured the State Legislature to improve the transportation network into their city. As a result, a series of canals along with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Roads were constructed. Strasburg residents became alarmed at the possibility of losing their commercial position and there soon emerged a charter for the Strasburg Rail Road to construct a rail line connecting Strasburg with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road main line near Paradise. Finally in the 1850's, trains were hauling freight and passengers.

About 100 years later, business had dwindled, and a severe storm in 1957 destroyed much of the track. It seemed the Rail Road had reached the end of the line. To the rescue came a group of local train enthusiasts who began bringing the Rail Road back to life in a totally new way. They added passenger cars and buildings, and today's Strasburg Rail Road was born, destined to become one of Dutch Country's top attractions.

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One of many bright and colorful displays.

by Clinton Martin

The National Christmas Center today houses a remarkable collection of Christmas scenes, but years ago the beginnings of this truly notable family attraction and museum were quite humble. The dream of opening wide the doors of a Christmas "museum" were years away, but the future founders of the National Christmas Center surely treasured their childhood experiences of Christmases past. It would be those formative years, enjoying warm family Christmas memories that would instill the love of the season in them.

Jim Morrison and Ray and Mary Daub, creators of the National Christmas Center, remember such Christmases. Jim recalls it as "a time past" for him, with wonderful memories of the family event. Ray reminisced, "Back in my day, Christmas really meant something. The stores, the entire downtown went all out and decorated. You knew it was Christmas. There really was a sense of goodwill. There was a different attitude about people in general. It was just a real nice time."

Tying these memories together to give birth to the National Christmas Center only became possible because of the fateful meeting of Jim and the Daubs. The Daubs were renowned "life cast" artists, taking molds from living subjects and "recreating" them in 3-D form. They had gained fame creating lifelike figures for many different

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themes and venues. In 1989, a department store in Delaware hired them to design a small Christmas-themed display. Jim Morrison, who had already become a passionate enthusiast of Christmas, happened to go to that very store, saw the display, loved it, and as a result soon came to meet Ray and Mary.

Jim had begun collecting at nine months of age when his aunt gave him his first train set. As a young man he continued to collect holiday items and research Christmas traditions. Jim's years of Christmas collecting and researching have made him one of the most respected Christmas collectors and scholars in the world! Jim is

Continued on Page 44

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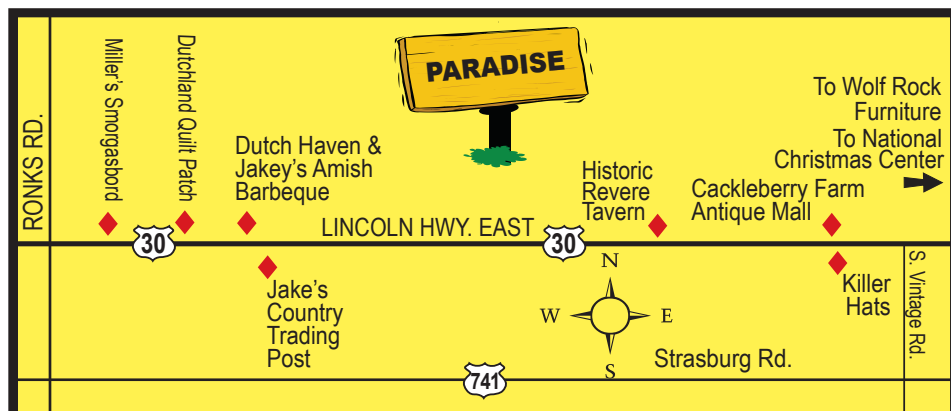
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The origins of RT 30, also known as "Lincoln Highway," date back to Lancaster's Colonial days when the frontier county needed a highway to connect it with the provincial capital of Philadelphia. The road that was constructed is now Route 340, still referred to as the "Old Philadelphia Pike." Soon, it was apparent that the Pike was insufficient to handle the increasing traffic, and in 1790, a commission to survey a new route between was created. Since the cost was too much for the state to undertake, the company charged with building it was given the power to demand "reasonable" tolls from users. Investors received dividends earned from tolls collected along the gates of the turnpike. (As the toll was paid, the gate or "pike" was turned, hence the term "turnpike").

Continued on Page 32

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For the nostalgic, housed inside the antique mall is an Old Time General Store, full of vintage barber shop, ice cream parlor, hardware and drugstore memorabilia which will take you back to the Mom & Pop stores of years ago. Not Just Baskets, located next door to the Cackleberry Farm Antique Mall, carries a huge selection of baskets, quilts,

luxury gifts and everyday items to choose from. You can fill a basket with any assortment of treats from pottery to spice mixes, quilts to candles, cookbooks to spa items – and have it all wrapped up in cellophane in a beautiful basket for a perfect gift. Or gather pet treats,

**Only Minutes Away
From Everything Amish
Country Has To Offer!**

dip and spice mixes and PA Dutch candies for your family, friends – even yourself.

Cackleberry Farm Antique Mall is located at 3371 Lincoln Highway East, Paradise,



Pennsylvania, on Route 30, only minutes away from everywhere and everything Amish Country has to offer. 

**CACKLEBERRY FARM® ANTIQUE MALL**
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Minutes away from everywhere and everything Lancaster County has to offer.

AN ENORMOUS 26,000 SQ. FT. ANTIQUE MALL!

Old Time General Store, full of vintage merchandise for sale... from Barber Shop, Ice Cream Parlor, Hardware Store, Drug Store Memorabilia and much more.

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www.cackleberryfarmantiquemall.com**

Open Mon.–Sat. 9:30am–5pm; Sun. 10am–5pm; Closed Tuesday

NOT JUST BASKETS

of Cackleberry Farm®



Huge selection of baskets, quilts, luxury gifts and everyday items including luxury bath and spa cosmetics, kitchen linens, cookbooks, pottery, pet fancies, home decor, candles, framed prints, dip and spice mixes, PA Dutch candies and many more special and exciting items



for your pleasure. Choose from ready made gift baskets or fill a basket from our wonderful display of gift items right from our store shelves and have it wrapped in cellophane and a bow.

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LOCAL AMISH AUTHOR!

Bestselling Amish writer, **Linda Byler**, introduces a new Amish novel, the first in her new series about Sadie Miller in Montana.

The Miller family's move from Ohio to Montana was, for the most part, uneventful, except that Sadie Miller had to leave her beloved horse, the palomino named Paris. Still, she likes the Montana snows and her job at Aspen East Ranch serving the ranch hands.

Unexpectedly, Ezra appears, the man who seems to be perfect in every way and fully intends to marry Sadie. But does she love him back? And who is this fascinating Mark who helps to rescue a dying horse and shows up at the Amish hymn-sing though he is English? Why can't she get his dark eyes and tall stature out of her mind?

Sadie finds some refuge in Nevaeh, a black and white paint. But when a dreadful accident involving wild horses occurs, Sadie must move forward into the unknown future.

Will she see the wild horses again? Why do these phantom-like animals take her breath away every time they appear on the horizon?

352 pages, approx.
ISBN: 978-1-56148-736-3
\$13.99, paperback, 5½ x 8½



Linda Byler

grew up Amish and is an active member of the Amish church today. She is the author of the bestselling Amish romance novel series, *Lizzie Searches for Love*. Linda is also well known within the Amish community as a columnist for a weekly Amish newspaper.

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MILLER'S SMORGASBORD

Part Eatery Part History Lesson

It all started in 1929 when Anna Miller served Chicken & Waffles to truckers while her husband fixed their rigs. It was a simple dish, but it was always served up with a smile. Over the past eight decades, Miller's has built a reputation for great food and friendly service. And now, they'll also be known for their unique, warm and comfortable dining rooms and atmosphere.

Enter the newly renovated Miller's and step back in time. As you approach the hostess stand, you find yourself walking on old time marble and slate. Images of bygone days line the walls. Pictures of employees, family and the evolving restaurant fascinate customers as they wait in line to be seated. At the front of this line, customers are greeted by hosts and hostesses through the windshield of a 1927 Graham Brothers Huckster truck. The folks at Miller's took an old, deteriorating truck and turned the front end into a hostess podium. Randy Heffner, a Miller's Manager, turns on the Huckster's lights. "Five weeks ago, this place was stripped down to cement floors and bare walls. Today, it's part eatery, part history lesson," he said.

As the hostess escorts customers to their table, they walk past mural sized, sepia toned images from the 1929 era. They are seated at tables made from old barn board planks, recycled, re-manufactured and shipped to Miller's from the state of Alabama. Antique-like chandeliers provide a warm glow, while tiny recessed fixtures light the images that fill the walls. To make access and seating more comfortable, Miller's eliminated 60 seats.

However, the changes are not limited to walls, lights, floors, tables and chairs. Albert Duncan, chief executive for Miller's, states that "It has always been about the food, and it will always be about the food. Therefore, we took this opportunity to give our food selections and style of service a facelift too. 95% of our food is made from scratch, and we contract with local farmers to make sure it's fresh. Now, with our newly expanded center island 'action station,' you can watch food prepared before your eyes. Executive Chef Steve Gainer is excited about some of the new items presented from the

'action station,' stating that "customers love the new charbroiler and the grilled chicken breast, ham, and grilled veggies. Our carved slow roasted sirloin and turkey breast is offered out of the action station as well as beef stroganoff and, of course, chicken & waffles." Gainer also notes that in addition to enhancing Miller's Traditional Smorgasbord offerings, they've also enhanced their Soup, Salad & Bread Smorgasbord, featuring 8 scratch-made soups,

exclusive salads and bakery fresh breads and rolls. And in the coming months, customers will also be able to order luncheon and dinner features from a limited ala carte menu. How does a colossal, charbroiled burger topped with all the trimmings and Miller's own warm bacon dressing sound?

Miller's is located on Route 30 and accepts reservations, call ahead seating, and walk-ins. 1-800-669-3568. 

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Through the end of the year... Amish Farmlands Tours In A Quieter Season

by Brad Igou

With the passing of October and the leaves of Autumn comes November, the month Amish and "English" alike give thanks, and then December with its most celebrated holiday of the year. Without a doubt, it is the beginning of a quieter, more peaceful time in Amish Country. The pace noticeably slows and the entire area becomes quieter with far fewer visitors on the roads. It's a relaxing and ideal time to tour the farmlands and to see where the Amish call home in a different light.

The area's oldest tour operator, Amish Country Tours, has provided shuttle bus tours of the farmlands since 1959. Its special holiday tours run seven days a week in November and Saturdays and Sundays in December, plus daily December 26-31.



A light dusting of snow only adds to the beauty of Amish Country during the holidays.

The 90 minute tour is an interesting and insightful look into the Amish and their culture with particular mention of Amish holiday customs.

A certified guide leads the way along roads least traveled by visitors. Tuesdays and Thursdays in

Continued on Page 37

Paradise (Cont'd From Page 28)

The Act described the construction of the highway, which was to be a bed of small crushed stones on top with, rather than dirt, larger stones underneath to prevent carriage wheels from cutting into the soil. This revolutionary system of road construction is credited to a John McAdam, whose name became the term for paved or "macadam" roads. The turnpike opened in 1795 as the first long-distance, hard surfaced road in the country. Taverns and stagecoach shops grew up along the turnpike for weary travelers. Of these, the Revere Tavern, dating back to 1740 and originally called the "Sign of the Spread Eagle", still proudly stands today. In 1841, the tavern became the residence of Reverend Edward V. Buchanan and his wife Eliza Foster Buchanan. Eliza was the sister of Stephen Foster, whose immortal songs will always be a part of Americana. Foster not only penned music at the tavern, but sent many of his manuscripts to Eliza, also a talented musician, for her approval. On the banks of the Pequea Creek, Eliza and Stephen played many of Stephen's 200 songs, including "Way Down Upon the Swannee River" and "Oh, Susanna."

Wherever you happen to call "paradise," we hope you can see that a little bit of our own Paradise won't do you any harm! 



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Historic Lititz • A Hometown Treasure



There really is no place quite like Lititz, and visitors should plan time there while in Amish Country. Along with dozens of storefronts of specialty shops, Lititz Springs Park, and its idyllic setting are a throwback to a quieter America.

The Lititz story is tied to that of the Moravian faith in Bohemia. As was the case with other persecuted religious groups in Europe, many Moravians sought freedom in the New World, arriving in the early 1700's, with settlements in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. In 1755 the town actually took the name Lititz, the German spelling for Lidice, where European reformers had taken refuge in the 15th century.

Music and education were important to the Moravians. In fact, the Lititz schoolhouse

erected in 1746 marked the beginnings of what was to be Linden Hall, the oldest continuously operating residence school for girls in the United States.

For one hundred years, Moravian church members were the only people permitted to live in the town. It was not until 1855 that non-Moravians were allowed to own their own homes. The complex of buildings comprising the Moravian congregation is well worth seeing, particularly the church built in 1787.

One name is linked forever with the history of Lititz --- Julius Sturgis. It was Julius Sturgis who opened the first commercial pretzel bakery in the New World in Lititz. The year was 1861, and the site at 219 East Main Street is on the National Register of Historic Places.

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A tour of the bakery, still in operation, is unlike any other and well worth your time.

The more you explore Lititz, the more you'll agree it is one of Amish Country's best kept secrets!

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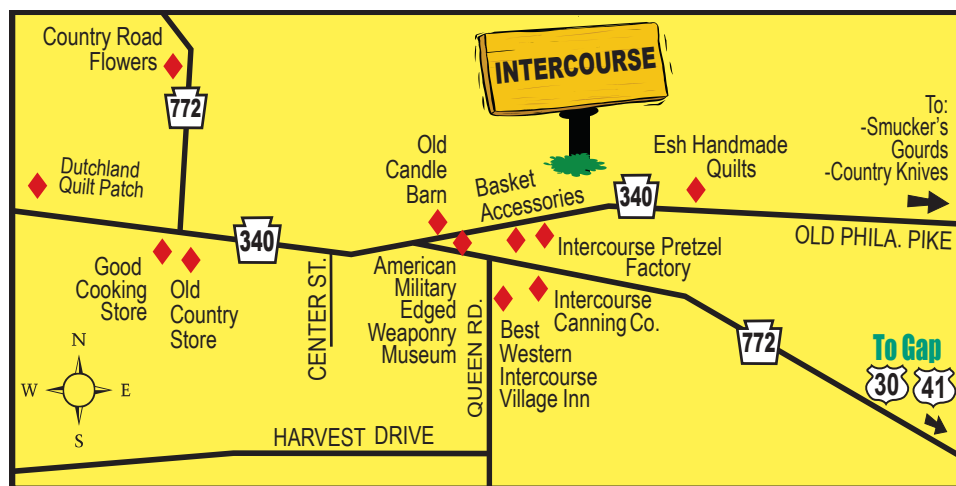
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Welcome to Intercourse PA



Perhaps no other town in the entire country can claim its fame on one simple thing --- its name. Harrison Ford drove a buggy past the road sign on a memorable visit in the Hollywood blockbuster hit of the movie Witness. For years people have postmarked "Intercourse" on envelopes, and the jokes from visitors who travel through Bird-in-Hand to Intercourse are endless. There are several theories for the name, but that which we find most plausible follows.

Around 1730, the Old Provincial Highway (now Route 340) was laid out to connect Philadelphia with Lancaster. Conestoga wagons hauled

freight back and forth between the two cities. Providing rest for travelers and horses, taverns sprouted along the way, becoming centers for news, gossip, and commerce. The construction of a log tavern in 1754 at the intersection of Newport Road and the Highway took "Cross Keys" as its name.

It remained such until 1814, when the name was changed to Intercourse as part of a failed real estate scheme of a Mr. George Brungard, who had acquired 48 acres of nearby land and attempted to lay out a town site and divide it into

Continued on Page 36

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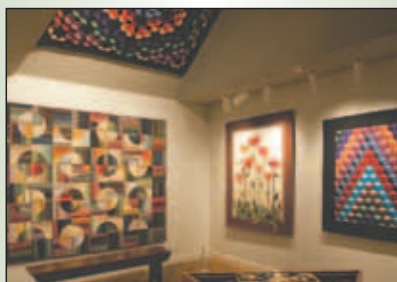
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Coming from Lancaster on Route 340, we're on the right at the first traffic light in Intercourse.
Visit us Monday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. year-round.

Intercourse (Cont'd From Page 34)

sections for sale by a lottery, advertising "151 handsome building lots of \$250 each to be drawn for by number." Renaming the town made sense, as intercourse had a common usage referring to the pleasant mutual fellowship and frequent intermingling which were so common in the informal atmosphere of the quiet country village.

Over time, Brungard's scheme begat others. As recently as 1971, an enterprising soul tried to take advantage of the town's name by selling deeds for one-inch square plots of Intercourse to visitors. Creative, but nonetheless a failure. By 1880, Intercourse had a population of 280 with a post office that actually moved among stores or restaurants as owners hoped visits by residents would increase their business.

The local stagecoach service started around 1898 as "a single horse conveyance similar to a market wagon, with a roll-up curtain and double set of seats." When the stagecoach driver knew of passengers beforehand, their comfort on cold days was added to with the placement of hot bricks heated in the oven, and wrapped in newspaper to preserve their warmth.

As the days of the dirt road drew to a close, so too did the stagecoach era. In 1923 a Transit Company was organized and bus service initiated to and from Lancaster. While "many of the Amish residents of the area were anxious to see the line started, they did not want to invest in stock of the Company. Instead they bought books of tickets which were really prepaid bus fares." Enough money was raised to buy a Mack Auto Bus for \$6,800. It held 25 passengers and even had solid rubber tires!

Today Intercourse has been recognized as a "foodie" town by the Visitor's Bureau. You'll soon discover why walking the streets of this tiny hamlet is an absolute must-visit for everyone. 🐾

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Soft Pretzels - Plain, Herb, Brown Butter or Sugar n' Spice

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Amish Farmlands Tours (Cont'd From Page 32)

November are the height of Amish wedding season so it's not uncommon to pass by an Amish wedding, marked by the many carriages filling the yard. At the same time, school age children continue their studies in one-room schoolhouses and are frequently seen playing games at recess time.

When we're lucky enough to encounter an early snowfall, nature creates one of the most spectacular scenes you will find anywhere. Imagine vast panoramas of rolling hills and farmland blanketed in pure white beauty. Add an Amish family out for a ride in a horse-drawn sleigh and you're looking at a Norman Rockwell right before your eyes

The Amish Country Tours guide typically stops at a bake shop, roadside stand, or craft shop on an Amish farm, so that visitors might have some personal contact with Amish, who, more and more, turn to cottage industries to supplement or even supplant their farming income.

Of course, more than anything else, visitors learn a great deal about the Amish way of life from the area's only certified guides. Education, church services, farming, weddings, holiday celebrations and changing lifestyles are among the tour topics.

Tickets are available at the Amish Experience Theater, at Plain and Fancy Farm, Route 340, between Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse. Shuttles are limited to 14 passengers and advance reservations are strongly suggested. Call (717) 768-8400, ext. 210. A special Super Saver package, including a tour of the only designated "Heritage Site" Old Order Amish house as well as admission to the critically acclaimed "Jacob's Choice" shown on the hour at the Amish Experience Theater, is the best visitor value. 



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Intercourse, PA

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Open 7 Days a Week! Visit our online store at Lancaster-Gallery.com!

Shopping in Amish Country (Cont'd From Page 16)

building above the entrance! Take the Centerville Road exit off of Route 30 west of Lancaster, heading south on Centerville Road. The store will be off to your left.

• Perhaps you don't know what to give? •••••

Free-style it looking for some last-minute bargains! Great buys abound in every corner of Amish Country, as long as you know where to look. We've lined up some fun places to shop, places where you'll likely find the deal of the season.

After over 20 years in business, Amish Country's basket authority, **Basket Accessories**, is closing its doors forever on November 30, 2011. They are liquidating the entire inventory of the store, meaning you'll discover huge store-wide discounts and other great deals on Swan Creek candles, Victorian Heart purses, Amish-made wrought iron, Legacy stationery, and, of course, locally made Amish baskets. Visit while the bargains are hot. 3614 Old Philadelphia Pike, Intercourse (right next to the Intercourse Pretzel Factory.)

Have a collector on your shopping list and don't know what to get? The hard part is deciding what kind of collectible you are looking for. Amish Country has it. **Aimee & Daria's Doll Outlet** carries thousands of dolls ranging from \$2 to \$2,500. Chances are your budget fits within that range! You'll find this amazing doll outlet on Route 30 just five minutes east of the Outlets. Call 717-687-8118.

If you are looking for a more eclectic mix, you'll want to head up to Adamstown PA. This is **Antiques Capital USA**, and there are dozens (hundreds?) of quality antique stores for you to peruse. Perhaps the granddaddy of them all, **Renninger's Antique Market**, is open every Sunday from 7:30am to 4:00pm, and is located on Route 272 in Adamstown.

They say you can find anything in Adamstown, so if you are hunting for a bargain for a hard-to-shop-for friend, hit the antique store trail and pick out something nostalgic, one-of-a-kind, and of course, look for a great deal. If you haven't ever shopped at **Shupp's Grove**, you need to schedule a return trip to Amish Country. Opening again for the season in April 2012, Shupp's features theme weekends for collectors and bargain hunters.

After rummaging through some of yesteryear's best memories in the Adamstown area, you might be hungry. Swing by **Union Barrel Works** for delicious food, and craft-brewed ales and lagers. Call 717-335-7837 for directions.

Meanwhile, a few miles away, west on Route 322 and north of Lititz, shoppers pick up more great finds at **Brickerville Antiques**. Sitting at the intersection of Routes 501 and 322, you'll find Brickerville Antiques has turned a restored barn dating back to 1857 into a two-floor destination for quality antiques. You'll find everything from antique cash registers to salt and pepper shakers. Call 717-626-0786 for holiday hours.



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Finally, if you are shopping for that special lady in your life, or you are that special lady, jewelry must be on your mind. **Kitchen Kettle Village**, a shopping destination within the destination of the village of Intercourse, has announced the brand new opening of the **Jewelry Box**. This store has the best baubles and jewels you can imagine, specializing in Pandora.

It has been great fun for me serving as your holiday guide for your shopping journey through Amish Country. Enjoy your retail pursuits in the area. Needless to say, if you uncover shopping delights we should know and write about, please let us know at editor@amishnews.com.



The Amish

Experience

at Plain & Fancy Farm



Last year marked the 51st anniversary of three of Lancaster's premiere attractions, all at one location on the AAA designated Scenic Cultural Byway, Route 340, mid-way between Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse.

This year marked the 52nd anniversary of Plain & Fancy Farm as the very first family-style restaurant. It remains a legendary dining experience. At the same time, Amish Country Tours (Dutchland Tours) began the first regularly scheduled tours for visitors through the scenic Amish farmlands. And 1959 also marked the opening of the Amish Country Homestead, the only Amish house tour designated a Heritage Site by Lancaster County.



Amish House Tour Unravels Riddles

Amish people wouldn't appreciate visitors walking through their homes all day...nor would you! So the best way to see the inside of a house is on a tour. At the Amish Country Homestead, the staff is committed to interpreting the changing Amish lifestyle. Rather than a museum, it has the feel of a real, "lived in" home. Guides take visitors on a fascinating 45-minute tour through the nine rooms. Discover how church is held in the home and hear the singing. See how Mom does her laundry---with a gasoline engine! Upstairs learn about Plain dress, while the kids enjoy the marble rollers.

The Fisher Amish Schoolroom is where you (or the kids) can sit at actual Amish school desks and learn how all eight grades are taught in one

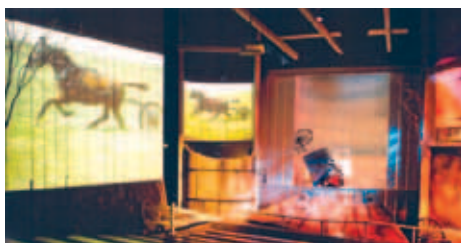
room. An Amish schoolteacher helped decorate the room to give it the feel of a real school. It's all included in the house tour.



Interpreting the ever-changing Amish culture respectfully and accurately is no easy task. The authenticity of the Amish Country Homestead resulted in its designation as the only Heritage Site Amish house tour in Lancaster County.

Amish Hi-Tech

In 1995, a new concept in interpreting Amish life debuted when the Amish Experience F/X Theater became only the third "experiential" theater in North America. The goal of this one-of-a-kind project was to give a more personal, intimate view of the Amish, connecting past to present. Rather than a somber documentary, the story goes inside an Amish family as their son



Jacob struggles to decide whether to remain in the Amish faith.

An important missing link in most tellings of the Amish story is the persecution of the Anabaptists in Europe and the perilous journey to America. Rather than observe, visitors will now feel a part of history as special effects, including an amazing technology called "Pepper's Ghost," combine with smoke, wind, rain, and fire effects in a wrap-around barnyard setting.

A superb blending of entertainment and education, this touching and exciting production has moved some people to tears and children to exclaim "Wow!" This show, which has been called "400 years of history in 40 minutes of magic," can only be seen here in Lancaster, so be sure to make it a part of your visit. (Shows on the hour.)

Where the Amish Live & Work

Visitors who simply drive around looking at Amish farms rarely come away with much insight into the unique culture that attracts people from around the world. Amish Country Tours provide certified guides to take visitors down the backroads, deep into the farmlands and scenery that is as beautiful now as it was 50 years ago. Guides offer fascinating information on one-room schools, farming practices, "cottage

\$2 OFF Amish FX Theater and Homestead Tour Combination Ticket

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Plain & Fancy — Farm to Table Since 1959

industries,” wedding customs, and more. Did you know there are Amish millionaires?

Winter Amish Farmland Tours

See inside back cover for days and times of tours.

But you are not just sitting on the 14-passenger shuttle the whole time. Whenever possible, a stop is made at an actual Amish farm. Other stops may include a local bakeshop, roadside stand, or craft shop. Having a guide is recommended over tape tours, which are often outdated and can never answer questions about special activities you may see that day. Purchase tickets for this 90-minute tour online at AmishExperience.com.

A Lancaster Original

Amos, Ben, Manny and Elmer are the Amish farmers who supply the Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant with sweet corn, tomatoes, watermelon, cabbage, broccoli, squash, peppers and onions. These neighbors, and the neighbors before them, have helped Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant go “from farm to table” for over 50 years. The restaurant is AAA recommended, a PA Preferred and ServSafe award winner, and the Pennsylvania recipient of USA Today’s Great Plate Award.

The Amish Farm Feast

Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant is best known for being Lancaster County’s original family-style restaurant. The all-you-can-eat Amish Farm Feast includes your entrees, side dishes, starters, desserts and beverages. Enjoy fried chicken, roast beef, chicken pot pie, baked sausage, real mashed potatoes, buttered noodles, green and yellow string beans, dried sweet corn, chow chow, cole slaw, raisin bread, rolls and apple butter, lemonade, iced tea, hot tea, coffee, sour cream apple crumb pie, shoofly pie and vanilla ice cream. A \$3 off coupon valid for each adult in the party can be found adjacent to this article.

The New “ala carte” Menu

The restaurant also offers a new ala carte menu featuring mouth watering appetizers, signature soups and salads, charbroiled burgers and sandwiches, and made-from-scratch entrees and platters. The ala carte menu is also a great value with Lunch Specials from \$7.95 and Dinner Specials from \$10.95.

The Country Store

Find books, videotapes, candles, souvenirs and local handcrafts, and more. Explore The Country Store’s collection of traditional Amish clothing, straw hats, bonnets, toys and dolls, and



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Feast includes entrees, sides, starters, beverages and desserts and is valid for up to 6 adults. Not valid Easter, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving or w/ any other offer, special, group rate. Not valid on ala carte menu. Expires 3/31/12 PLU 505

Hours/prices/offerings may vary. Call 717-768-4400 or visit www.PlainAndFancyFarm.com to confirm.

discover new treasures to adorn your kitchen and home. You'll find seasonal items as well as Christmas decorations, available year-round. The store also features Kitchen Kettle jams and jellies, bakery fresh items from Miller's Bakery, and Plain & Fancy chow chow and apple butter.

AmishView Inn & Suites

While you're at Plain & Fancy Farm, you're invited to stroll up and visit AmishView Inn & Suites, a classically beautiful hotel that features elegant accommodations and incredible views. If time permits, a front desk representative can provide you with a quick tour of the hotel. The indoor pool, fitness center, arcade, whirlpools

and fireplaces make AmishView perfect for an intimate getaway, family vacation, or corporate retreat. Complimentary hot country breakfast, wire-less internet, HBO, DVD players, special amenities and kitchenettes come with every room.

Where It All Began

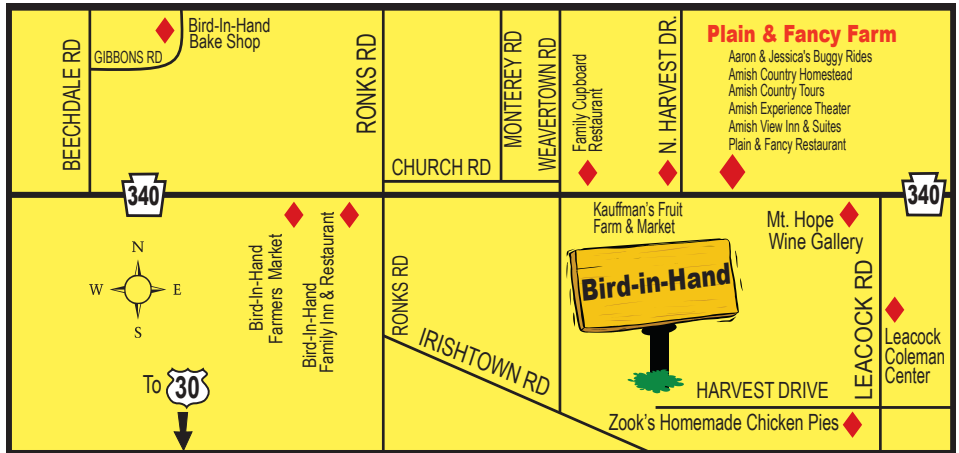
With all of these amenities and attractions in one beautiful location surrounded by Amish farmland, the Amish Experience at Plain & Fancy is the ideal starting point to enjoy all that the area has to offer as you create your own special Lancaster County experience! 

Welcome to the Village of Bird-in-Hand

Of the many unique village names that dot the Amish Country map, one of the more interesting is Bird-in-Hand. William Penn, an English Quaker, had founded the colony of Penn's Woods (Pennsylvania), and settlers began arriving from Europe in the early 1700's, moving westward from Philadelphia. The trip by stagecoach, or Conestoga wagon with freight and merchandise, lasted several days. Inns were built every few miles, identified with signs held by an iron pole or attached to the side of the building. The reason for the signs was so that they could be understood by all nationalities. Further, since many teamsters or wagoners were poorly educated they could not read. Given orders to stop at a certain inn, they were able to do so by recognizing the artwork on the signboard.

The legend of the naming of Bird-in-Hand dates to the time when the Old Philadelphia Pike was being laid out. By 1734, surveyors at McNabb's Hotel were discussing whether they should stay at their present location or return to Lancaster to spend the night, one of them said, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The sign in front of the inn, which became known as the Bird-in-Hand Inn, is known to have once "portrayed a man with a bird in his hand and a bush nearby, in which two birds were perched.

Variations of this sign appear throughout the town today. McNabb's Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1851. By the following year, a three-story hotel was built to replace it. More recently, it was Bitzer's Hotel before becoming the present Village Inn of Bird-in-Hand, a beautiful bed and breakfast property. The Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County states that the existing brick building "may be one of the few 19th century inns in the context of a small town in Lancaster County, which survives with a high degree of architectural integrity." It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. When referring to their bird in hand symbol, some residents say that the bird nestled in the human hand indicates friendship, comfort, and hospitality, all of which you'll discover in this perfectly delightful little village of shops, farmers markets and eateries. 🐔



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"Amish Farm Tour" Adults \$17 Child \$11
 Visit A Real Amish Farm. Tour the Barn, See the Cows and Big Clydesdale Horses, America The Way It Used to Be. (50-60 minutes)
 Our Customer Preferred Ride

Finding Authentic Amish Shopping For Inside and Out

by Clinton Martin



Two Amish-owned shops embody the spirit of country living in Amish Country like none other. For wares for indoors, visiting the **Country Housewares Store** on Musser School Road in Leola is a shopping stop you'll not soon forget. The selection of fine china, glassware, and household items is impressive, but Country Housewares is truly remarkable because of the merchandise found so fascinating by visitors, yet "every-day" for the Amish...the shaving cabinets for men that one would find

in almost every Amish home, the endless variety of Amish engagement, anniversary, or wedding gifts, the vast selection of old-fashioned wooden toys and much, much more. See ad on page 22 for store hours.

For the outdoor weekend warrior, there is only one Amish Country destination – the **Leacock Coleman Center** on Old Leacock Road. The

mission here is to get you readied for your outdoor pursuits, whether it be camping, tailgating, or simply relaxing on the patio. While specializing in Coleman products, you'll also find an expansive selection of traditional oil and kerosene lamps perfect for lighting an Amish home – or your campsite! See ad on page 39 for more information. 

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Over 70 local Amish families "lend a hand" to the Riehl's store, whether it's sewing the quilts or making other items like quillows, birdhouses, spice mats, candles, cookbooks, and jams and jellies.

So, take some time and wind down at this lovely farm in the country - see the maps for location. Because you know, that no matter how busy farm life is, you'll always be welcomed with true hospitality.

Sam's Steins: The Perfect Place to Start, or Add To Your Man Cave!

by Clinton Martin

Prepare yourself to swoon over an abundance of breweriana gathered over 40 years that can only be described as majestic. All it takes is one step into Sam's Steins & Collectibles to know that this is a Man Cave haven. Sam May and his daughter Samantha own and operate this tribute to the legacy that beer has given us – signs, taps, glassware,

t-shirts, and of course steins. Some of the items are elegant and old-world. Others just make you smirk.

Sam is always a great resource for finding rare items and anticipating new merchandise that might be released. In fact, he is often the first to know. So, if you are looking for something in particular, stop in and pick his brain. I have been fortunate to expand my own



Everything's cool at Sam's Steins



Plenty of neon signs, both contemporary and historic brands



Taps, Tubs, and Steins... and More!

collection of pint glasses with many a visit to Sam's, and I can tell you that his prices are consistently better than what you'd find elsewhere.

Whether or not a collector, a visit to Sam's is an experience unto itself. Easy to find on Route 30 at 2207 Lincoln Highway East, you can call at (717) 394-6404, but if you truly can't get there in person (and that would be a mistake), you can visit online at www.samssteins.com.

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Learn about cheese while you shop!

why we're here," explained Morrison. German immigrants to the Lancaster, Berks, Lehigh and York areas truly began the first Christmas celebrations and traditions in America. In fact, the first documented indoor Christmas tree was in Lancaster City in 1821, and F.W. Woolworth launched his empire selling Christmas to the local German population—half his business was at Christmas. The naming of the town of Bethlehem on Christmas Eve in 1741, the clear candy toys and cotton-wrapped Christmas trees... Lancaster truly is a birthplace of Christmas culture and tradition. And thus, the National Christmas Center was born as a multi-attraction facility, a "mini-Disneyland" of Christmas, with a historical recreation of the First Christmas that brings together all the elements!

Holiday memories abound throughout the exhibits...tableaus of Amish Country Christmas customs to celebrations around the world, from Santa's Workshop to a walk through the streets of animated "Tudor Towne." The Christmas Center also boasts an amazing collection of hard-to-find ornaments in its holiday shop. Easy to find in Paradise on RT 30 east, just 5 miles east of RT 896, call 717-442-7950 for holiday hours.

It's hard to leave without humming a holiday tune and counting down the days until Christmas!

National Christmas Center

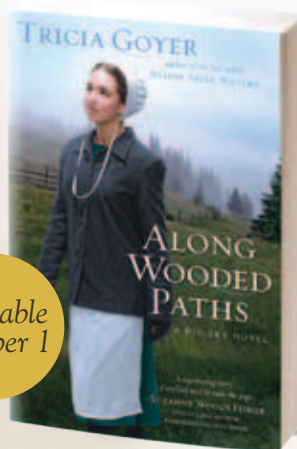
(Cont'd From Page 27)

an historian, an author, and his Christmas collections are known throughout the country. Many of the items at the National Christmas Center come from Jim's personal collection.

So, how did the National Christmas Center come to be in Amish Country?

"I felt that Lancaster was where the celebration should be. The richness that enhances the holiday season came from this area, and that's

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Stop By Our Bakery & Gift Shop

Be sure to visit our famous bake shop, where you can purchase some of the best goodies found in the area, including shoo fly pies and sticky buns – all baked fresh daily. Don't forget to check out our unique gift shops. We cater to so much more than PA Dutch mementos. Shop for family and friends or just pamper yourself with a well-deserved gift.



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Storytelling in Amish Country... Meet Three Authors of Amish Fiction

by Clinton Martin

The Amish way has never seemed so real as on the pages of a riveting novel you just can't put down. There are plenty of academic tomes out there that wax philosophical with a laundry list of Amish facts, but where is the real emotion of daily "Plain" life?

That remains in the hearts and minds of today's most popular Amish-themed fiction writers, including Vannetta Chapman, Shelley Shepard Gray and Amy Clipston, all spinning threads of

Amish prose and plot for droves of fans across the country.

All three will be making two local stops on November 18th. The first at Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant with a lunchtime book signing. The second at Plain and Fancy Farm where plenty of time has been set aside for meeting and greeting.

The Plain and Fancy event begins with a family-style meal at the restaurant, continues with presentations from each of the authors in the Amish Experience Theatre, and concludes with a dessert social in the Amish Country Homestead. Tickets to the Plain and Fancy event can be purchased online at AmishExperience.com.



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GREAT ATMOSPHERE, BETTER FOOD, EXCELLENT BEER!

by Clinton Martin

Spending the holidays in Amish Country is always a warm and inviting way to dodge the chill of winter. It is at this time of year that a hearty meal with loved ones seems to lift the spirits better than anything else. So when you are ready to unwrap the scarf and set aside the gloves for a time of welcoming hospitality, head straight to where the food is a treat, the finely crafted ales can't be beat, and the atmosphere makes the meal complete. Awaken out of your winter slumber with a visit to the family-friendly brewpub, Union Barrel Works. A visit to this stately historic site on the square in Reamstown brings you into a great old-world pub experience, complete with an original tin ceiling and sturdy hardwood maple floors. The tantalizing smell of something delicious simmering in the kitchen might even distract you from the first choice you will have to make, which is what tap to tip. If you'd like a recommendation, I'd encourage you to try their devilishly dark Belgian ale. It is made with eight different two-row malts, without candy sugar to raise the alcohol level. Saaz and Kent Golding hops are added prior to the 82 degree fermenting process. Jack Frost won't know what hit him when these flavors warm his cheeks. For more information, visit www.unionbarrelworks.com.



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At Victorian Mount Hope Mansion It's a... **Dickens of a Christmas**

Special to Amish Country News



December 1 - December 23

What would Christmas be without the Christmas stories we all love so much? Why it would be like deciding not to have a Christmas tree just because we had one last year, or ignoring candy canes because we've already eaten them in the past!

No, to be celebrated right and proper, tradition should continue in our lives, and continue it does inside the Victorian Mansion at Mount Hope Estate, home of the glorious Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, for 32 years, one of the state's most celebrated events.

It's the 30th annual "Dickens of a Christmas," where guests to the Mansion each holiday season interact with some of the most notable and unforgettable characters that Charles Dickens ever penned.

You'll sing along with the Fezziwig children in "A Holiday Romance," as they try desperately to stay awake and catch a glimpse of Father Christmas, share Holiday games and traditions with the jovial Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig in "A Christmas Dinner", and rejoice in the spirit of the season in Charles Dicken's telling of his immortal classic, "A Christmas Carol."

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300 Paradise Lane, Strasburg, PA 17579, 717-687-8976. Toy trains from 1800's to today. Operating train layouts, movies, library, gift shop. NTTMuseum.org

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3510 Old phila. Pk., Route 340, Intercourse PA. 717-768-7101. Landmark store featuring local crafts and quilts. Extensive Fabric Center & Quilt Museum. theoldcountrystore.com

RENNINGER'S ANTIQUE MARKET (SUN).....33
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PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE

Trains in the Attic

by Brad Igou

Since my father passed away several years ago, it has been my job from time to time to climb up into the attic at my mother's house (the house I grew up in) and carefully lower things down to her. Dad had things organized amazingly well, with bags and boxes plainly and accurately marked as to their contents, with certain items always stored in very specific places.

On one such foray into the attic space, I noticed a grouping of boxes that for some reason hadn't caught my eye for as long as I could remember. Taking a closer look, I realized they were all of our model trains, mainly American Flyer, from Christmases past. Seeing them brought back many joyful memories...

Many dads and sons have a special bond at Christmas time because of model train sets. In our case, the whole family got involved several weeks before Christmas. I knew the time was near when my mother started storing dried coffee grounds in cans. More on this in a moment.

Suspended in a special spot in the garage over the car was a big piece of plywood measuring four by eight feet, although when I was young it must have seemed like 40 feet by 80 feet. When it was time, it was removed and took its designated spot on the family room floor. It was painted green, and two sets of tracks were conveniently pre-attached. One was a long oval track that traversed the border. The other was a figure eight track on the inside.

Our first mission was to locate our buildings and decorations on the layout. We had some older cardboard buildings and some "newer" shiny, plastic ones. Like many families, it was tradition to add something each year. There were miniature people, cars, trees and other village pieces to place on our platform. We used sand for our roads. And, Mom contributed all those dried coffee grounds to serve as the ground covering the entire layout, ignoring nature's reality that the grass should be green and the roads should be black.

Finally, it was time to retrieve the trains. They were lowered from the attic and carefully unwrapped. To this day, almost miraculously, and a continuing tribute to my father, they remain in their original 1950's boxes.

I had my favorites, of course. The handcar, with the two men pumping up and down as it travelled around the track was especially fascinating. The

amazing steam engine actually puffed smoke, and I carefully used the eyedropper to inject the special liquid into the smokestack. The dining cars, lit from within, and revealing the silhouettes of the people on the windows, was a fantasy waiting to be enjoyed every time it passed my eyes.

I guess I was a typical mischievous kid, so it was no surprise that I liked to put all the cars on the figure eight track and make them just long enough that as the train went around, the engine at the front would just miss hitting the caboose at the end.

Friends would come each year to see our layout and join in the fun of operating the trains and pretending what was going on in the town below. Looking back, our set-up was really quite simple, and nothing like the amazing train layouts to be seen at the Choo Choo Barn and National Toy Train Museum.

My mother says I used to play with the trains by myself for long periods of time. For me, this was a special land, a real place, where I could think up stories, rob trains, save passengers from impending doom. Perhaps it's something I've simply repressed, but I don't recall if I ever ran the train into our cat Fluff, however I might well have.

As an adult, my fascination with trains has grown to those of the larger variety. My affection for train excursions of all kinds has not diminished, from our local Strasburg Rail Road through Amish Country to those in far reaches of the world. We once traveled on a special train excursion from Lancaster to Altoona, and the famous Horseshoe Curve. That's where my dad was born, grew up, and first fell in love with trains. Over the years, I've been on amazing train rides in Mexico, Costa Rica, China, and Japan. Each brought with it special memories and experiences, and I still recall fondly passengers I met along the way.

So there you have it. Perhaps Thomas the Tank Engine is part of your world. Maybe you rode Harry Potter's train to Hogwarts. For me, I'm likely to show up in the corner of one of the rooms at the Toy Train Museum or the Choo Choo Barn this holiday with a moistened "gleam" in my eye... those boxes in the attic, my youth, my love of trains, all became a part of who I am. Thanks, Dad. 



AMISH COUNTRY NEWS

PO Box 414 • Bird-in-Hand • PA 17505
(717) 768-8400, Ext. 218

AmishNews.com

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